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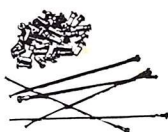
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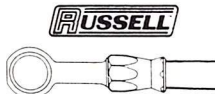


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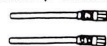
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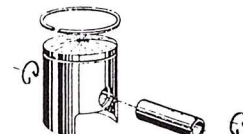


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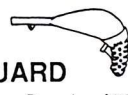


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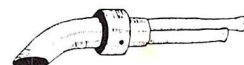
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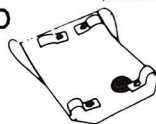
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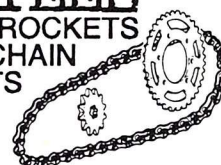
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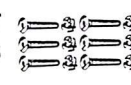


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**On the cover:** It is said that the Inca people called Machu Picchu the Navel of the Universe. If so, then this is a photo of Charlie contemplating his navel, after a long, long trail riding adventure from which we didn't expect to see him return. He's back, but we expect him to be back in Cuzco some day, selling Mooch goggles on the street.

**August 1998**  
**Volume 28 Number 8**

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**Warning:** there isn't anything that will top the feeling you get from piloting a motorcycle through the woods, but you have to accept the risks inherent in this sport if you're going to do it. There are no safety features expressed or implied, there are no airbags or seat belts to protect you from yourself. The entire burden of personal safety rests right on your shoulders, Bucko, and if you mess up it's not the land owner's fault, not the bike manufacturer's fault, and certainly not our fault. We recommend using all the protective clothing you can, and be aware of what you're doing at all times. And then, it's fun.

## Dangerous Knowledge:

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**Address Changes:** If you don't want to miss an issue, let us know in advance of your move, so we can update our files before we mail your magazine into the ozone. The P.O. is supposed to forward magazines, if you tell them to, but they don't do it in a hurry.

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# LAST OVER

by Paul Clipper

## Sunday Drive

**A** year or two back I told you how to fly to far away events without disrupting yours or anyone else's life. Since then I've had many people ask me, "Clipper, that article was so helpful, when are you going to tell us how to drive to the races?"

The first time that question was posed to me I immediately ran down the street to Whitey's Place just to calm my nerves. Whitey's is the local watering hole, and thought I don't drink anything stronger than Near Beer there, the sight of all my neighbors hoisting them down does wonders for my nerves.

Call it a contact drunk. I sip my flat suds and scan around the bar smiling to myself. "I could make every one of these people Trail Rider readers, in their weakened state." I think to myself. When they came to, they wouldn't even know what happened. They'd just have a house full of magazines.

The second and third time I received the request for a driving article I had the same reaction, but now I'm strong enough to tell you the reason why: Just about every other week—sometimes more often than that—I have to drive nearly the full length of the New Jersey Turnpike.

Now, there was a time when people would speak with fear and reverence about the Pennsylvania Turnpike. I once told Mike Rosso of KTM that I had given someone directions that included the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and he went ballistic. "What?!" he screamed, "You sent a mere AMATEUR on the Pennsylvania Turnpike? Are you INSANE? He's never driven anything like that in his life! You're going to get him killed!"

Well you know, at the time I might have respected what Mike was saying, purely out of ignorance. I have driven the length of the PA Pike many times, with its rolling green hills and leafy Amish quaintness, and I only have two words to say about it now: Kiddy Ride. A child could drive it, standing on the seat with Rover working the pedals for him.

The Jersey Turnpike is a malevolent beast in comparison. Oh sure, it isn't twisty-turny like the PA Pike, but you don't need turns in a race track to make

it deadly. It also isn't in horrible shape, and neither is it—this summer at least—covered over with construction sites. There is only one thing that makes the Jersey Turnpike the flesh-eating virus of travel alternatives on this side of the country: the other drivers.

If I could block off every exit on the Turnpike, from 7A to 18E, and for that matter, from 1 to 6 as well, I'm sure I could turn that road into a pleasant Sunday drive. As it is, you have to be strong for it, and I will endeavor now to tell you why.

If you were to talk to the NJ Turnpike Police, I'm sure you would hear that they have a problem with speeding on the Turnpike. I think the term "speeding" is a matter of perception. I believe someone trying to do fifty down one of our resi-

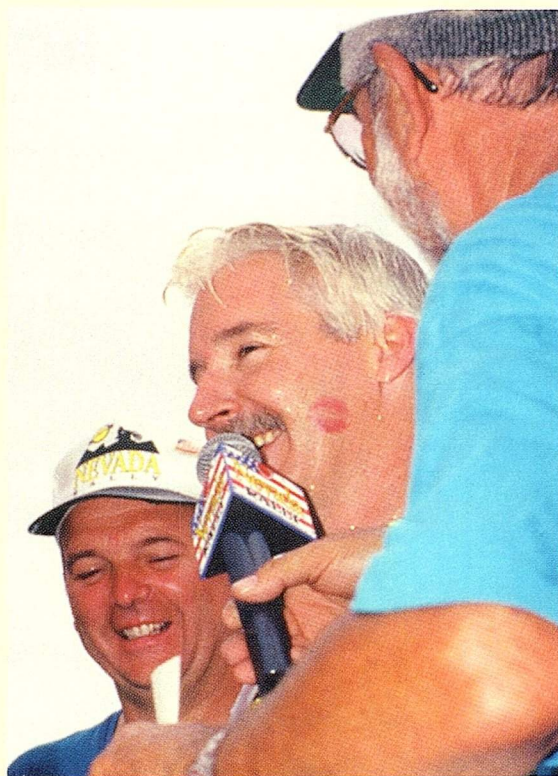
good that he'll be loaded with 40,000 pounds of canned artichoke hearts, so he's not going to be setting any land speed records in the merge to follow. You'll be cruising easily at a mellow 40 mph into three lanes of traffic that are driving as if every demon in perdition is just below Exit 6 (and they may be right, I've never been down there).

Speeding is okay, though, I can hang with that. If everybody wants to do 80 mph, why I can do it too. The thing I have trouble with is the lane changing habits. As we enter the Pike at Exit 7, there is a long, straight entrance lane, giving you plenty of time to accelerate up to the breakneck pace necessary to keep up with the bozo parade. The trouble is, they have to let you in, and I have seen people wailing down the center lane actually move to the right lane to block anyone trying to get on. This behavior is just one small part of the overall kinked lane etiquette of drivers on this road. It gets worse.

There are three lanes northbound in this section of road. After Exit 10 the roadway splits and the trucks get their own side of the highway to play in. Before that point, you will routinely see people (and trucks) trying to do something in excess of 70 to 80 mph in the right lane, drivers in the center lane doing anywhere from 50 to the posted speed limit of 65, and folks driving at anything from 55 to 90 in the left lane. When I write it down like that it doesn't look so bad, because after all they all seem to be averaging the speed limit, or thereabouts. The trouble comes when you actually have to drive through this mess, and it makes for rather herky-jerky forward progress if you're in for the long haul.

Look around you. Driving in the right lane you're doing the speed limit of 65, or a little above. This is because the right lane is the only clear lane on the roadway. The reason for this is that the NJ DOT posts signs on the Turnpike that say "Slower Drivers Keep Right," and I'll tell you right now that New Jersey is absolutely full of bigshots in expensive leased cars who would rather chow down a bucket of bait than have anyone think they were a slow driver. So they all drive to the left, leaving me to give you Tip #1: If you want to move quickly on the NJ Turnpike, stay to the right.

Look to the left, at the car doing 55 that you just blew past. It is probably a Nissan with Maryland plates, and if you're a perceptive observer you will note one plain fact: the driver of the car is terrified. This is the one common thread through every one of my trips on the Turnpike, every year I've been driving it, and as a defensive/offensive driver you can find a way to make this simple fact an advantageous one: The dri-



dential streets is speeding, and should have their right foot cut off as a reminder that other people actually live in this neighborhood. On a freeway or turnpike I can be a little more lenient. I wouldn't have any problem at all with raising the speed limit to 80 mph, just as long as the people driving it know what they're doing. Unfortunately, if they were going to set the speed limit according to the driver's abilities, in New Jersey the Turnpike would loaf along at about 35 mph. And with good reason.

Get on the Turnpike with me, at Exit 7, heading north, and I'll show you why. When you curve around the entrance ramp you'd better be on your toes, because there's no doubt you'll be following an 18-wheeler fat from the Petro truck stop on Route 206. Chances are



vers in the center lane are scared silly. They won't look over at you, they can't turn their heads. Watch closely and you'll see tears running down their cheeks because they can't even blink any more. They've got their little Japanese car spinning just as fast as they think it can go, with their neck and arms locked solid, trying not to watch Mr. Artichoke Heart as he slams by at 75 with the throttle wide open. Terrified. They won't change lanes between here and the top of the Pike, and they'll take either the Western or Eastern split up at 15, whichever one is in front of their car. The center lane people are probably the most dangerous drivers on the Turnpike, because they are tense, scared, and really don't know how to handle a car. If you crowd them too much they'll slam on the brakes or veer wildly into the other lane, causing one of those legendary Turnpike pile-ups you see on the news occasionally.

Tip #2: Stay away from the center lane people. They are panicking.

The second obvious scourge we have on the Turnpike is the legendary Left Lane Bandit, or LLB for short. The LLB adopts a number of habits, all odious, but remains in the left lane no matter what. First, being in the left lane to an LLB means you're the king of the bigshots. If the slow drivers have to stay to the right, being in the left lane puts you in the same class as Dale Earnhardt, even if you drive like the Dunkin Donuts guy. The LLB has no skill other than gas pedal and brake, and could be driving at any speed. What usually happens is that an LLB that wants to drive at a safe and sane 60 to 65 mph stacks up a bunch of other LLBs that may want to drive at 90. None will move over, so you can cruise along in the right lane or center lane and pass them all at 65 or 70. Also, a fair number of the LLBs out there are also scared to death; their philosophy being that if they just get into the left lane and stay there they never have to risk their neck by changing lanes. So they stay in the left lane as long as they possibly can, and then sweep across three lanes of traffic if they want to get off the highway.

Tip #3: The left lane is a trap. Avoid all who drive there.

Admittedly, this doesn't leave you much in the way of options, and just sitting here writing about it is giving me the willies. I can only tell you that as a dirt bike racers you have the skills necessary to travel this road, but don't do it lightly. Stay loose, be ready to change lanes, follow no one, and stay to the right. If those few tips don't make you feel any better I offer this: as bad as the NJ Turnpike might be, it's still just a Sunday drive compared to that most heinous of highways, Route 95 in Connecticut.

But I'll tell you about that some other time, right now I'm going to Whitey's to calm my nerves. □



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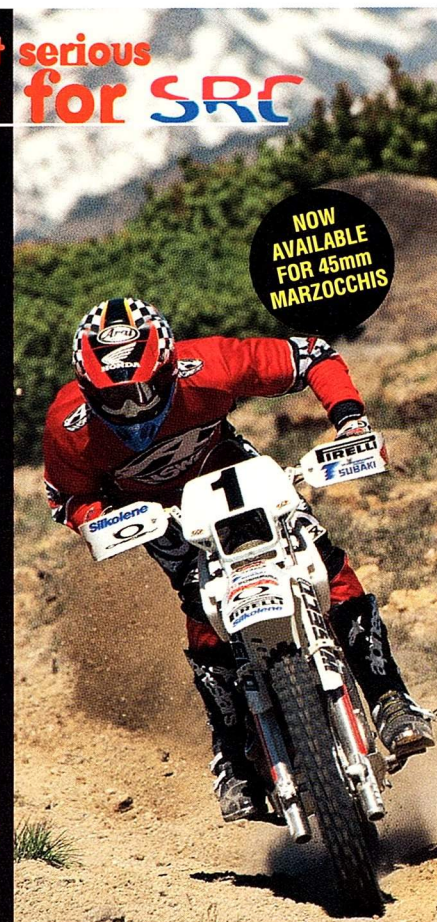
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# EASTERN NEWS

## Mike Lafferty Watch

Local boy Mike Lafferty has been raising a ruckus in the AMA National Enduro Series. So far, he's won three of them overall, including round two in New Jersey, round five in Ohio, and just this past weekend he picked up his third overall win in Minnesota. The AMA Reliability Enduro Series events also counted towards the National Enduro Series title, in a way we have yet to really understand, and he's won two of them overall as well. There has been speculation here very lately that he may have been wrapped up the national championship title once again, but checking with Rod Bush of KTM we find that he is very, very close but not quite there. "According to our figuring," said Mr. Bush, "Mike has to do somewhat better than awful in Rhode Island in order to wrap it up." So, this sets the stage for some awesome spectating in Rhode Island, which is still to come as this is being written, but unfortunately it has already happened as you are reading this. We hate being in limbo like this. Look for confirmation next month that Lafferty has indeed wrapped up his second national championship, or read



## Trail Rider Needs Freelancers

Do you take photos at the events? Can you write a story about a race and make it fun to read? If you can't, do you know someone who can? The reason we ask is that Trail Rider is expanding exponentially, and we need to talk to you if you might want to pursue a side job as a race reporter. We need freelancers all over, including New England and the Northeast; the Pacific Northwest of Oregon, Washington and Northern California; the Midwest; and the South from the coast all the way to Texas. We have big plans here, and Trail Rider is about to go through a growth spurt that is going to turn us into a Major Force in this industry and sport. To do it, we need to expand our horizons, and to do that we need to talk to you, if you think you can do it. We're even going to start paying freelancers real money in the near future, so call us right away at (609)953-2922, or send samples and a resume to P.O. Box 2038, Medford Lakes NJ 08055.

about what went wrong right here in Trail Rider Magazine!

### Hare Scrambles for a Good Cause

Remember the cold, rainy Reading Off-Road Riders' hare scrambles national this spring? If you were there, you remember it; we nearly drowned and froze at the same time. However, one really fine thing about the event and club is that the hare scrambles benefited a good cause, and they were reasonably successful. In spite of the weather and low turnout, the RORR club was able to donate \$2900 out of the proceeds for the event to the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Congratulations and a

pat on the back to all of the RORR members, and here's hoping that next year's event is bigger and better...and warmer and dryer!

## CJCR to Six Days

Speaking of donations, the Central Jersey Competition Riders set aside a portion of their entry fee this year to go to qualifying ISDE riders out of the ECEA this year. CJCR has donated \$366 to the Six Day fund after their event, which will go towards helping ISDE riders cover some of their expenses. Congrats and thanks to CJCR!

### Higher Education

Not to be outdone with charitable causes, the Rhode Island Rhody Rovers sent us a note that their annual Gnarly Dude turkey run raised over \$2000 to benefit the Exeter-West Greenwich High School Scholarship Fund. The Rovers reported that 230 riders turned out for the annual "gnarly" event, their biggest turnout ever. Good on 'em!

## Embarrassing Mistake

If you're in the publishing business, what do you think the most embarrassing mistake you could print would be? No, none of Charlie's stories apply; what

we're talking about here is reporting on someone's untimely death when they are actually very much alive. Last month we reported that word had come to us that Lynn Burton, the trail boss of the Al Eames Memorial trail ride a few years back, had passed away suddenly. We were all upset about it, and reported as such. Unfortunately, within a week of publication we heard from the same source that he was wrong, and then we received an E-mail message from the deceased himself. "The Eastern News article on the 'Sad Passing' of Lynn Burton was very distressing, especially as I, Lynn Burton, have been feeling fairly good and not dead at all!" he wrote. "Sure I'm riding slower than I did in the past, but I figured that this was due to age rather than rigor mortis. Although I appreciate the kind words on my behalf, and hope that the Al Eames Memorial will be remembered as a quality event in the Berkshire annals, I want my numerous riding friends and acquaintances to know I am both alive as well as still riding. With the co-operation of an Arkansas motorcycle club (the Arkansas Dirt Riders), I hope to again organize a dual sport event here in the Ozarks. Riding here is great and would welcome any eastern riders to come down and join me trail riding. Once again please pass the word that I have not yet gone on to that "Dual Sport in the Sky" and even after the last enduro I rode in Missouri in which I thought I had died - I really had not."

Our apologies to Lynn, and our congratulations on recovering from something usually considered permanent. □

## Where to Ride

8/2 Hoot Owl II, Uxbridge, MA  
8/9 Berkshire Mudclinger Enduro, Granville, MA  
8/9 Canyon Enduro, Middlebury Center, PA  
8/9 AMA Nat. Enduro, Divide, CO  
8/16 Kayaderosseras Kaper T.R., Lake Desolation, NY  
8/16 Speedville Enduro, Speedville, NY  
8/22 Nervous Novice Parent/Child Ride, Union CT  
8/22 Salmon Run Junior Enduro, Union CT  
8/23 AMA Nat. Enduro, Drummond Island, MI  
8/23 ECEA Hare Scrambles, Stanhope, NJ  
8/23 Salmon Run Hare Scrambles, Union CT  
8/30 Beehive Enduro, Mauricetown, NJ

## NAMES AND ADDRESSES

### New England Trail Rider Association (NETRA)

P.O. Box 478  
Ellington, CT 06029  
(860)875-5757  
East Coast Enduro Association (ECEA)  
RD 4, Box 5671  
Jonestown, PA 17038  
(717)865-0601

### Vermont Trail Riders Asc. (VETRA)

P.O. Box 136  
South Pomfret, VT 05067

### Pennsylvania Trail Riders Association (PATRA)

Box 77  
Thomasville, PA 17364  
Racer Productions (AMA GNCC Series)  
Route 7, Box 459  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
(304)284-0084  
Budds Creek MX/H.S.  
(301)475-2000

### AMA

P.O. Box 6114  
Westerville, OH 43081  
(614)891-2425

### New York Trail Rider Alliance, NYTRA

New England-New York Coalition, NENYC

8 Komar Drive  
Charlton, NY 12019

### New Jersey Trails Conservancy (NJTC)

1799 Route 38  
Mt. Holly, NJ 08060

### District 6 Sports Asc.

P.O. Box 554  
Lebanon, PA 17042  
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# THE REST of the WORLD

## ISDE Reunion Again

Last year saw the first ISDT Reunion event, put on by Leroy Winters and Dick Mann in Fort Smith, Arkansas. The event was met with great praise by all who attended, and news of the event has sparked considerable attention across the country. This year Leroy sent us news that the event is happening once again, and the date is October 3rd and 4th at Byrd's Campground outside of Fort Smith. Impound day for all bikes will be Friday, October 2nd. This year the Reunion is sanctioned by AHRMA, and it is a unique event. To enter you either have to have ridden the ISDT/ISDE in the past, or enter on a machine that is AHRMA-legal as a Vintage bike or a pre-1981 "ISDT Classic" machine. If you're interested in the event, we suggest you call right away and get an entry form, or at least talk to Leroy about it. The number down there is (501)646-1168. The event is set up in true

ISDT/ISDE style, with trail sections and grass tracks, sound tests, terrain tests, everything; and the bulk of the machines present are either full-on Vintage machines or classic dinosaurs that are sure to bring back memories by the boatload. We're pretty sure the Trail Rider staff is going to be there in force, and we'd suggest you do that same. As long as we remember to do it, we'll have a full ad on the event next month.

## New Spectro

After years and years of Golden Spectro two-stroke oil, Spectro Oils of America have introduced a new two-cycle premix oil. Named Spectro SX, the new oil formulation is available in both 100 percent synthetic and a partial synthetic formula. The new SX oil is designed to be used at manufacturer's recommended ratios of 32:1 while still burning clean and smokeless. This is in contrast to the old Golden Spectro formula, which is best used at about 50:1. We have some of the new SX oil here, and are planning to give it a thorough test. In the mean time, you can find the new SX two-stroke oil, as well as a new

complete line of SX products, at your local dealer.

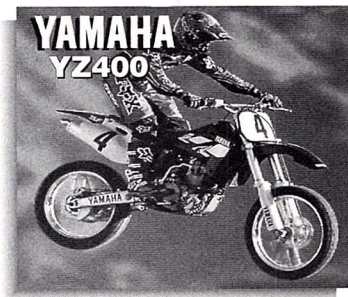
## National Reliability Champions

The AMA National Reliability Series/ISDE Qualifier series held its finale recently at Loretta Lynn's Ranch in Nashville, Tennessee. The structure of this event was to name a national champion in each of the classes. Rodney Smith (Team Suzuki) was the overall winner, but officially an overall winner was not named.

Instead Rodney was credited with the 0-125cc Two-Stroke National Championship title. In the other classes, we had Chris Smith winning the Lightweight (0-250cc) Four-Stroke National Championship on a Honda XR250, Mike Lafferty winning the 175+cc National Championship riding his 250 KTM, Barry Hawk taking the Middleweight (251-400) Four Stroke National Championship on a Yamaha YZ400, Scott Summers winning the Heavyweight Four Stroke National Championship on



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a Honda XR600, and Jeff Fredette winning the Senior National Championship on a Kawasaki KDX200. All these championships were based on the results of this one race, and not on the entire Qualifier series, of which Mike Lafferty won two events overall, Washington and Ohio.

## Emperor's New Plastic

Transparent plastic would be really cool on your bike, until you got the inside all scrungy with mud and dirt. Instead, how about translucent plastic with a color? Acerbis makes it; in red, green, yellow, blue and orange to match the big five popular brands, and they call it Ghost Plastic. It is colorful yet transparent, and it looks really wild, especially on a clean bike. Fenders, shrouds and side panels, DHH headlights and MX handguards are all available in Ghost Plastic, see your Acerbis dealer for more info.

## New ATKs Announced

ATK, America's other motorcycle company, sent us a release spelling out their new model intentions for 1999. The big change for the upcoming year is suspension, with the new off-road and enduro model motorcycles all getting Paioli 46mm conventional forks and Ohlins shocks as standard equipment. All of the

four-strokes will have the same, but additionally the thumpers will come with the Ohlins PDS system on the rear. The dirt track ATK will continue to come with WP suspension components.

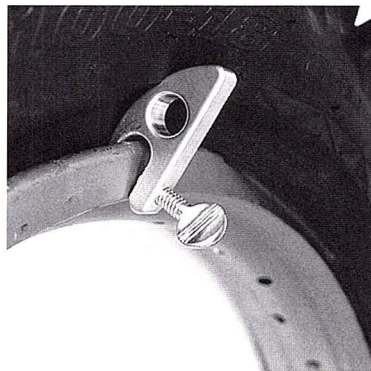


The 250/260cc LQ models will feature new engine specifications to pull more low and midrange power out of the Rotax two-stroke engines, according to ATK head engineer Phil Walker. Rotax has also improved the clutch mechanism for better clutch response and easier cable pull. Three new models will also be released—a 490 Enduro and Cross Country/ES four-stroke, a 500DTS dirt tracker, and an updated and race-ready 50cc Mini Cross Country.

The big news is financial, however. Two significant things: one, the new ATKs are going to be cheaper, approximate \$500 less than the prices of the 1997 version in some models; and two, ATK is now offering factory financing, so new buyers can put as little as 10 percent down and pay possibly as little as \$99 a month to own a new ATK. To learn more, see your ATK dealer, or call them at (801)298-8288 for the name of your closest dealer.

## Bead Stop

If you're into gadgets, this has got to be one of the coolest little things we've seen recently. The Bead Stop is a little aluminum wedge with a thumb screw that you tighten onto the rim of your wheel when you're changing a tire. It then becomes "the tire iron you don't have to hold on to" according to the literature we received. It really is a good idea for people who need that "third hand" while they're changing a tire, and at \$8.99 it's cheap enough to justify a place in your toolbox. Now all they have to do is make it a little bigger and we can use six of them per wheel for changing foam tubes—they're quite a bit cheaper than Vise Grips! Learn more about the Bead Stop from Cycle Gear, at 1-800-CYCLE-GEAR. □



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Grand National Cross Country Champion

Background Photo is of Larry Roeseler.  
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# MANAHAWKIN GNCC

Rodney Smith tops South Jersey's first Racer Productions event

By Paul Clipper, photos by Clipper, Mark Uth, and Jungle Dave

Manahawkin, NJ 6/7

The only thing we were worried about with the Manahawkin GNCC was that the actual running of the race would be an anticlimax to everything else that happened getting it here. We reported back in the February issue that Dave Coombs of Racer Productions had been out to look at the site of the Meteor Motorcycle Club's hare scrambles in Manahawkin, and had given it the green light for a GNCC date. It was reported on in February, which means it happened in December, and since then a small band of Meteor members had been hacking away in the woods, hacking their way through the permit process, and setting up a race that Coombs—and the club—would definitely be proud of.

The course layout was masterminded by Lindsay Pirie, who long ago ran outlaw hare scrambles on a property very close by. His right-hand men from January on were Milt Catts and Doug Benson, and between the three of them they designed, cut, cleared and marked the entire course. Every weekend a different group of club members would join them to help, but basically the course was the work of these three people, and they are possessed when it comes to course layout. One of the new trails used for the course was even nick-named Argument Trail, after the heated debate between Doug and Milt over which way it should go (of course, if you know them it's no surprise, since they argue about everything anyhow). We received weekly updates on the course here at TR, and after a bit we were convinced that there was more work going into this simple hare scrambles course than any other one in history.

I saw it all, but that didn't mean the rest of the world knew what was going on, so I wasn't surprised when Jeff Russell, of Racer Productions, called and asked if I had seen what was happening down there in Manahawkin, and how much work was he going to have to do when he arrived the week before the race.

"Jeff, I don't know for sure, but I don't think you're going to have to do anything," I told him.



Duane Conner (17) of Team Gas Gas had the lead in the first turn, but dropped out with bike trouble. Rodney Smith and Steve Hatch (#4 & 2) took the point for the rest of the day.



Scott Wolfersberger led the morning specialty class race to a first place finish in the Super Senior class.



View of the Pro pits and pit row from the edge of the course. Racer Productions turned the site into a real tent city for two days.

"Really?" he said.

"Yep. They've got the permits, the course is all marked, the pits are staked out, and a lot of the parking is leveled. I think you're going to have an easy week."

"Well good," he said, "I'll make sure to bring my clubs..."

And darned if he didn't play golf nearly all week. I ran into him, on the way to the golf course with Fred Bramblett and Big Dave on Saturday, after the ATV race, and he confirmed it. "You were right," he said, "I just changed a few little things and everything

else was done. I've gotten more golf in this week than I have all year."

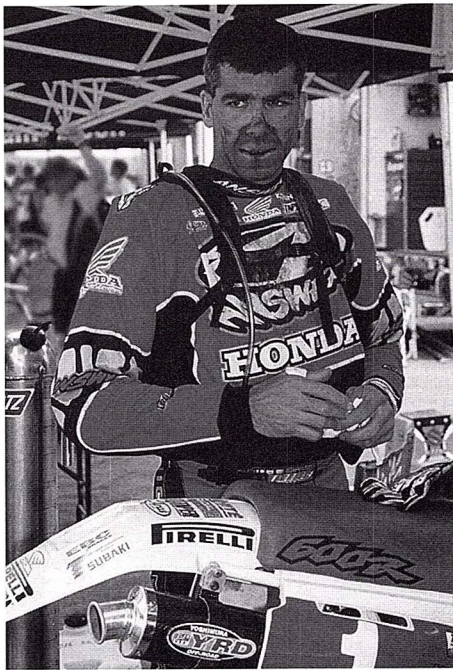
Dave Coombs, a.k.a. Big Dave, said the same thing. "This is great. The Meteor guys did a great job, the location is good, and I love being right down here by the shore with all this seafood. If anybody wants to know, tell them we'll be back. When we come into an area, if the race works out good, we plan for a long term relationship. We'll be back here next year, and every year after that they'll have us. I really look forward to working with Lindsay and the guys again."

So the course and the set-up for the event was a huge success. This is all important to



Trail boss Lindsay Pirie stands with Tom Zimmermann before the start. Zimmermann led the riders into the first turn, in honor of his son Bruce who passed away just weeks before the event.





SCott Summers missed a chance for more points, and we missed seeing him ride, after a first-turn injury put him out of the race.

the Meteor guys, since they did all the groundwork, but to the rest of us the big news was that we were finally going to see all the GNCC stars in New Jersey. Fred Andrews would be here on his new Kawasaki ride, and he'd been kicking everybody's butt so far this year. The Suzuki team, with Rodney Smith, Steve Hatch and Paul Edmondson would be racing. And the guy we were all wanting to see, Scott Summers, the master of the big, booming XR600, would be there trying his darndest to grab a win and some valuable points towards the championship. And with the course laid out over a giant old sand pit, it promised to be a spectating feast.

Cut to the chase. Sunday morning they had a C class and specialty class race, just to warm things up. The announcer's main attention was the leader of the race, and Scott Wolfersberger of the ECEA was running away with the overall win. He was riding in the Super Senior class, as we all cheered on him and Jack Lafferty Sr., the main battle going on. The course looked good, although it was obvious that there was going to be a little bit of a dust problem. Ironical that it was so dry, since the start area had been a swamp up until a week ago, and the pro pits was an actual lake until two weeks before.

The pros were getting ready down on pit row. They had everything set up real showy, all the teams side by side with their EZ-Ups cheek to jowl—Team Kawasaki with Brian Keegan, Steve McSwain and a host of others, even Jeff Fredette was there, all the way from Illinois. Team Yamaha, with Tim Shephard, Barry Hawk; although no Randy Hawkins, since there was a national enduro on the same day in Washington state. Team Suzuki and Team Honda, as well as Duane Conner representing Team Gas-Gas. The other side of Pit Row was all the serious local guys, the Laffertys, Fred Hoess, Frankie Vanaman, Mike McHale, Dave Gunn from Team Manchester Honda, lots more. The national enduro kept Doug Blackwell,



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Joel Dengler was the local star of the GNCC. He ran up front with a flat tire and still finished fifth overall.

Mike Lafferty, Hawkins and more away, unfortunately, and Scott Plessinger had racked himself up at a GNCC a few weeks before and was still involved in the healing process, so we missed him, too. But it still promised to be a heckuva show, as they all shuttled down to the starting line for the one o'clock start.

Before the first wave, the Pro class, was waved off, Lindsay and the boys made time for a tribute to Bruce Zimmermann, a long-

time friend and one of the original designers of the intended MX section for the race, who passed away earlier this year. Tom, Bruce's dad, started the event by riding Bruce's bike through the first turn, and then Tom and Lindsay pulled off to watch the start.

We were all jazzed, but unfortunately it only took two turns to end the race for two of the series' top stars. When the flag was dropped Rodney Smith took the advantage and roared off into the lead, with the pack tight in behind. The bad news started in the first turn, when Fred Andrews stuck his leg out, caught it in a rut, and immediately blew his knee out. His day was over, right there. Then, in the second turn, Scott Summers had the bad luck to tangle with someone's bike, while the rider took a trip over the bars. Of all the freak things to happen, Scott caught a spinning rear wheel with his right hand, and nearly had his index finger tweaked off. The impact may have momentarily dislocated his finger, but the end result was a severely stretched ligament that left him without the use of that finger, and made it nearly impossible to use the front brake or the throttle. Summers made a lap around the course and hung it up for the day.

That quick, the two main competitors were out of the race. It sounds bad to say it, but with such a gap opened into the program it was a natural for the Suzuki team, with three strong riders, to fill the space, and that's exactly what they did. Rodney was setting a blistering pace, and led the race wire to wire. Steve Hatch early on challenged Rodney, and then settled in behind

#### Manahawkin GNCC

##### Class Results

Rodney Smith

Suz

##### Overall Champion

##### 200 A

1. Heath Bennett Yam
2. Brian Lawson Yam
3. Mark Sherwood KTM
4. Luke McNeil Yam
5. Steve Formanek KTM

##### 200 B

1. Cole Calkins Kaw
2. Jason Catlett Suz
3. William Hess Kaw
4. Ryan Dellaohelfa Yam
5. Lionel Asselin Hon

##### 250 A

1. Jim Jarrett Kaw
2. Robbie Jenks Yam
3. Doug Masencup Kaw
4. Aaron Kopp KTM
5. Bill Atkinson KTM

##### 250 B

1. Matt Beatty Yam
2. Brad Hamrick Yam
3. A J Snoop Kaw
4. D Nash Kaw
5. Mark Fischer Suz

##### Four-Stroke A

1. Harvey Whitaker Kaw
2. Darius Lattea Yam
3. Michael McHale Yam
4. Don Bohn KTM
5. Thomas Evans Hon

##### Four-Stroke B

1. Jonathan Skinner Yam
2. Stacey Clark Yam
3. Marty Michels Hon
4. Chris Vecchione Hon
5. David Dougherty Hon

##### Open A

1. Dave Gunn Hon
2. Donald Lingle KTM
3. Marc Grossman Kaw

4. Frank Vanamar KTM

5. Richard Bryan Hbg

##### Open B

1. Leonard Mesina KTM
2. Steve Bower KTM
3. Norm Richards KTM
4. Tim Prechtl KTM
5. Joseph Scarfi KTM

##### Pro

1. Rodney Smith Suz
2. Steve Hatch Suz
3. Paul Edmondson Suz
4. Brian Keegan Kaw
5. Joel Dengler Suz
6. Fred Hoess Suz
7. Barry E Hawk Jr Yam
8. Joshua McLevy Hon
9. Richard Lafferty KTM
10. Scott McLaughlin Yam

##### Senior (+40) A

1. Jeff Fredette Kaw
2. Andrew Smith KTM
3. Mike McCarren Yam
4. Kevin Reed CRE
5. Donald Bigley KTM

##### Senior B

1. Rick Thompson Kaw
2. James Vicheck Yam
3. Michael Schwartz Suz
4. David Hurley Kaw
5. Dan Compton KTM

##### Veteran A

1. Steve McSwain Kaw
2. Tim Shepherd Yam
3. Jeff Kirchner KTM
4. Jeff Murgel Kaw
5. Mike Beeler Yam

##### Veteran B

1. Mark White Suz
2. Clark Munger Suz
3. Russell Bain Hon
4. Dave Dzenutis Hon
5. David Myers Yam

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Brian Keegan ran fast and steady, and finished fourth overall for Team Kawasaki.

him and paced himself, making sure he was ready for a late-race attack on the veteran motocross pilot. Eventually Edmondson worked his way up into the third place spot, and that's the way they finished, one, two three.

But before that happened, the Suzuki team had to fight off numerous challenges from the locals. Team Yellow didn't fall into line right from the beginning. Steve Hatch seemed to have a little trouble getting warmed up, and he circulated in the top five for the first lap or so. What did shake everyone up was Joel Dengler, son of ECEA's near-champion of the '80s Bruce Dengler, who buzzed his Fun Center Suzuki right into second place behind Rodney Smith. Joel, a motocrosser by training, didn't even seem to be working hard, and he was roosting along getting used to the course and watching Rodney's lines. It started to look like Rodney was going to get knocked back to second, but then Joel picked up a nail or something and his rear tire went flat.

Hatch, who had been following close by, slipped by Joel and said bye-bye. Soon Kawasaki's Brian Keegan got by as well, and Joel was now circulating in fourth with a truly flat rear tire—he wasn't losing any ground, though, and his pit crew set out to find him a wheel. Pit captain Milt Catts checked around with the local boys and nobody had a Suzuki wheel, so he went to Mark Hyde of Team Suzuki and begged a spare. He set up a plan to change it, enlisting Steve Bromley's help, and they pulled Joel in for a 4.5 minute gas and rear wheel stop. Joel got back out and back on the gas, caught up to Keegan again but couldn't get by, finally finishing fifth. Joel did an excellent job keeping the pros honest, and now there's some talk that he'll check out a career in GNCC riding instead of motocross. You may be hearing Joel's name a lot more often if he does.

Another very hot local this day was ECEA champ Fred Hoess. Fred got off the line in fifth or sixth, and ran right up there with Edmondson, Hatch and the rest. He bobbled a couple of times and fell back to eighth or so, and found himself mired in traffic for a while. When Joel had his trouble and fell back, Fred latched onto him and was content to stay with Joel and

chase him around, since the heat and the dust had taken most of Fred's fire away. That was the positions they finished, with Joel in fifth and Fred in sixth.

Other local riders who done good: Dave Gunn finally had a trouble-free day, and he charged his Manchester Honda XR into first place in the Open A class. Right behind him was B&B's Donny Lingle, and then Marc Grossman and Frank Vanaman. Gunn found the Jersey course much to his liking, which he probably didn't expect. He picked up some great point at this race, which really helped his standings for the season.

The Senior A class was a fun race. It turned out to be a quiet battle between two of the Grand Old Men (well, early 40's) of the sport, Drew Smith and Jeff Fredette.

Drew was sporting a Mooch Racing jersey in honor of Charlie, who saved his life the weekend before. Jeff had driven all the way from Illinois with his son, who played with my son on a big dirt pile during the race (they were both incredibly dirty afterwards). Both riders were going well, with Jeff leading, when on the fifth lap I saw Jeff come in and stop at the Kawasaki tent on Pit Row. He wasn't getting gas, and we were all waiting for the leaders to finish up the last lap. As Fredette drank water I wandered over and said to him, "You know Fred, if you just hang out a couple of minutes Rodney's going to beat you in and you won't have to do another lap."

"I know!" he said, "Why do you think I'm waiting here?"

# NEW STUFF



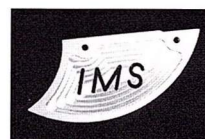
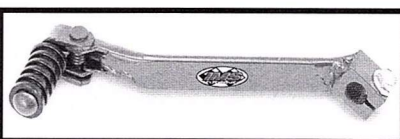
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In true Senior class fashion, Jeff rolled up past the line, just in case he saw Drew coming along, and waited for the overall winner to relieve him of another lap around. Hey, Senior riders are not dummies!

Josh McLevy, from Manchester Honda, and Rich Lafferty from Bromley KTM were both circulating in the top ten, but couldn't seem to move much farther forward. Lafferty in particular didn't seem to be having a good day, since usually we'll see him right up there dicing with Fred. They wound up finishing eighth and ninth overall, respectively, right in front of Steve

Anderson.

There was some confusion during sign-up for the event, pretty obvious that a few of the local guys didn't understand the structure of the classes. One glaring example of this is our friend Russell Bain, who rides in the A Vet class in NETRA, who wound up signing up in the B Vet class at the GNCC, probably thinking he was avoiding the Pro class, which actually is it's own division in the GNCC. There was a fairly close battle in the B Vet class, and we actually received a letter from a disgruntled racer who finished behind Russell and thus accused him of cherry picking. Oh well, until they start tattooing their classes on their heads, there's nothing we can do.

It was quite a day. They had 230 quads race on Saturday, 363 motorcycles racing on Sunday, and 2000 spectators at the event. Dave Coombs and his group were just tickled with the course and the reception they had, and promise to be back next year for another GNCC. For the record, too, we want to note that the Racer Productions trail crew stayed for two days afterwards, picking up all the trash, tidying the place up, and, most importantly, they groomed every inch of trail and then blocked it all off so it wouldn't be ridden on until next year's event. Their attention to the trail conditions was mind boggling. If everyone was this conscientious we would have no limit of nice trails to ride on.



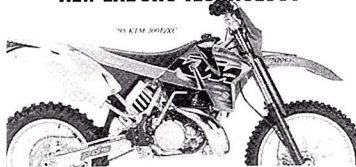
The racing was exciting and wheel to wheel in spots. This is Dan Palermo, who finished sixth A Vet.

The food was catered by Lucille's of Warren Grove, and Dave Coombs said it was the best food they've ever had at a GNCC event. Those of us who frequent Lucille's aren't a bit surprised, she's a great cook. All in all it was a fine first event for this major series in this area, and we're all looking forward to it happening again bigger and even better in '99. □

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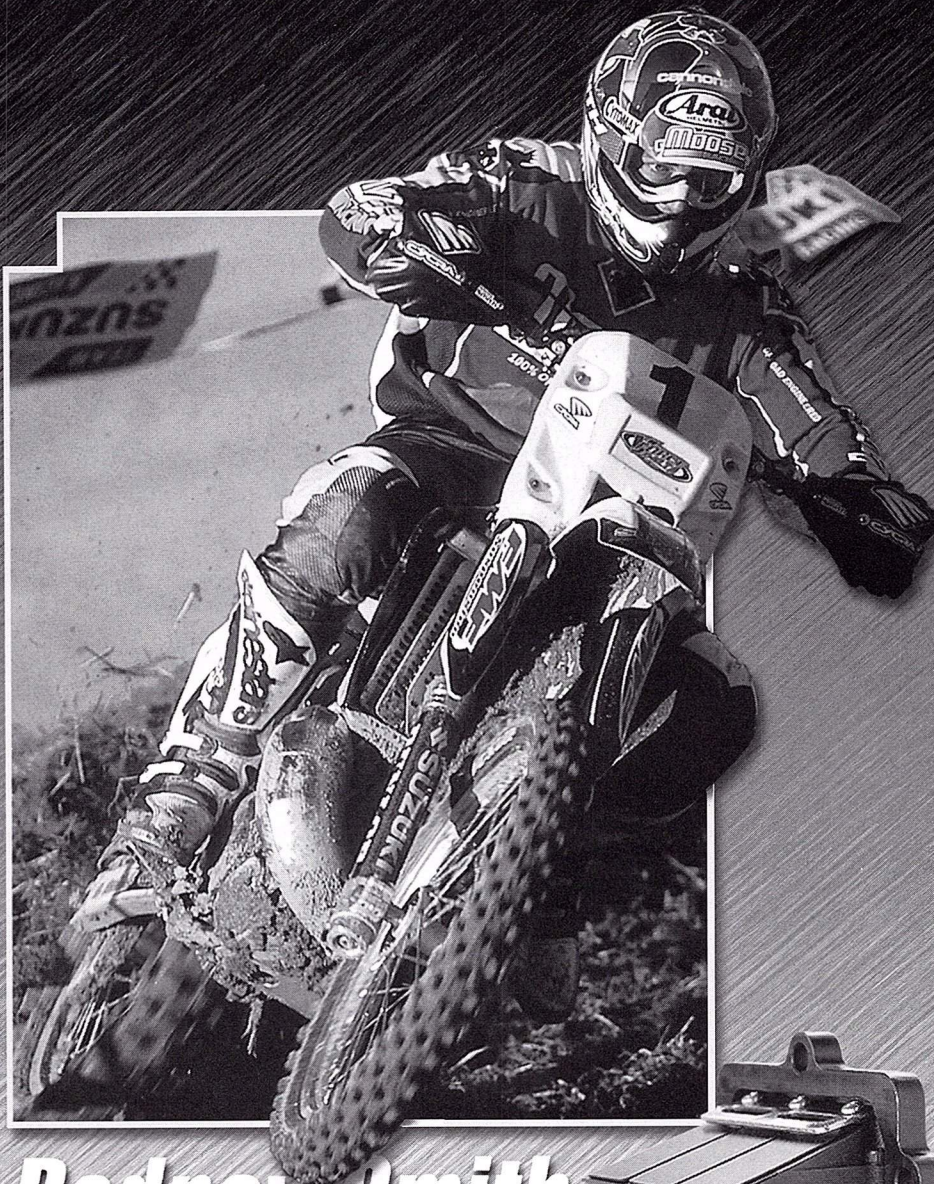
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# KTM 400SC vs. HUSQVARNA TE410

Trying out Yamaha's European competition

By Mark Uth

There's hardly a dirt bike rag out there that hasn't printed a mid-sized four-stroke shootout of some sort lately. This segment of the dirt market is white hot, as nearly every manufacturer has released some sort of new mid-sized thumper over the past year or so. New bikes and advanced technology has done its part in fanning customer hysteria. Additionally, real life issues like EPA legalization and registerability are becoming ever more important to riders, many of whom ride exclusively on public lands.

Like many riders, we here at Trail Rider have found mid-sized thumpers (around 400cc), to be about the perfect four-stroke engine size for Mr. Joe Q. Dirt rider. Where quarter-liter thumpers are too often left wheezing, trying to keep up, and open class models overtax the pilot's strength and stamina, the mid-sized four banger seems to provide that magical compromise of enough, but not too much, power. Over the past year or so, we've had the good fortune to sling a leg over each and every one of 'em, not simultaneously mind you, but saddle time is saddle time.

Noticeably missing from all those other magazine tests has been Husqvarna's midsize four-stroke, the '98 TE410. We took delivery of a brand new-from-the-crate TE410 from Husky's new North American importer a couple of months ago, and quite frankly, have found it to be among the best mid-sized racing thumpers we've ridden—Yamaha 400 included. Read on and we think you'll be convinced too.

But what about parts, you ask? Now before you write-off Husky as a declining manufacturer without parts support, let's set the record straight. Husqvarna's past troubles here in the U.S. were the result of an unresponsive importer at that time, Cagiva North America. Cagiva NA last imported '96 model year Husky dirt bikes, and quite frankly was never attune with and/or interested in the dirt market, allowing operations of this proud marque to slide into neglect and disrepair. Within the industry, this was secret to no one, but business being what it is, it took the Italian parent company, Cagiva Motor, S.p.A., a considerable amount of time and effort to wrestle North American operations away from Cagiva NA and find a suitable replacement.

Mind you that all during the interim, Husqvarna has continued to be successful



We added the handguards, and Mike Lafferty added the Trelleborgs and the exhaust to the SC, but aside from that the bikes were stock.



in Europe and other world markets. Huskys are a force in both the show room and competition, with numerous championships to prove it.

The happy ending to this story is that we now have a new U.S. importer, Cagiva USA, who's truly interested in selling and supporting Huskys and committed to correcting the transgressions of their predecessor. Cagiva USA is owned and operated by the Ferracci family, the very same who run Fast By Ferracci, a highly successful Ducati importer and race bike builder. Picking up the Husqvarna pieces here in the U.S. will no doubt be a tall order. However, we think that with the good Husky product (which it always has been) and the Ferracci

desire to win, there's no place to go but up.

Opposite the Husky TE410 in this series of tests is KTM's new racing thumper the 400SC; SC standing for "Super Competition." The SC is a makeover of the venerable KTM 400 EXC/MXC/DXC of past, with a decided slant toward closed-course competition. Motor, frame and suspension all proved familiar components. Our test specimen was Enduro Champ Mike Lafferty's race/practice bike, which we picked up the week after he rode it to an overall win at the ECEA/DER hare scrambles. With the field set, we were ready to get dirty.

## Husqvarna TE410

The last time we had an opportunity to ride the 410 was during the '95 model year press introduction festivities in Varese, Italy. Cagiva NA was still the importer, and that was the year that the 610's baby brother got a displacement boost from 350cc to 410cc, although the 350 bike was still earmarked for the U.S. market. The Euro spec TE410 was on-hand, equipped with the first generation (45mm) Marzocchi front end and all sorts of accessories that you'd expect for a European-legal dual sport. Performance

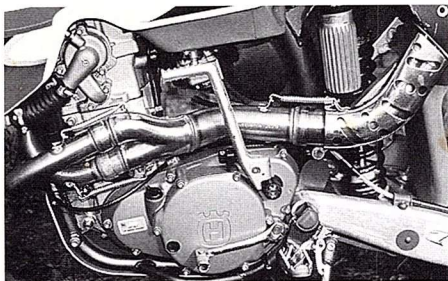
wise, it was tangibly grunter than the 350, its hogged out bore increasing displacement from 349 to a full 414cc. At the time it represented Husky's next step and generated considerable excitement.

The '98 410 now in U.S. dealer showrooms doesn't look all that different from that '95 Euro spec model we rode, although there are



in fact considerable differences. On the outside, the biggest change has been in the suspension department, a complete overhaul landing the latest 50mm Marzocchi Magnum fork on the front end and a new Sachs shock, superseding earlier Showas. There have been considerable changes to the motor as well. The '98 TE410 has been de-stroked, now sporting 91.5mm X 60.8mm (bore-stroke) dimensions, reduc-





The Husky engine is not only effective, it looks cool as well. We haven't figured out the Sachs shock yet.



The KTM uses WP's Extreme forks. Very nice, right out of the box. All the KTM parts are first-rate.

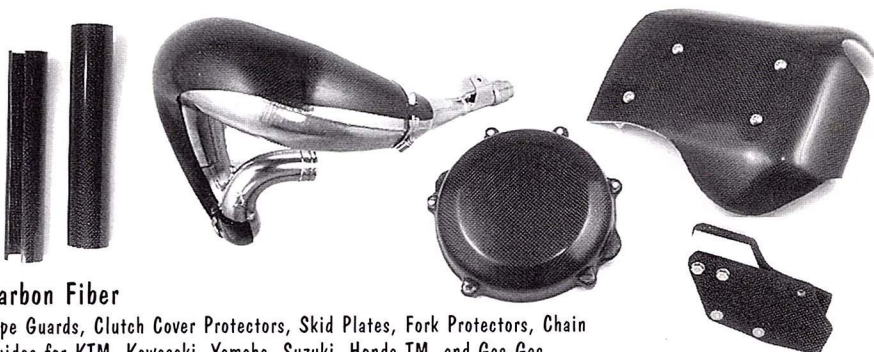
ing displacement to 399.5cc. Earlier motors shared a 63mm stroke, with 84mm (350) and 91.5mm (410) bores, respectively. Carburetion on the '98 is new as well, a 36mm Dell'Orto pumper carb replacing the previous 36mm Mikuni (410) or 34mm Dell'Orto (350) fuelies. There are plenty of other refinements and extras, almost too many to list. It adds up to a polished, well put together package, second to none.

#### Howzit Werk

The '98 Husky TE410 is the lightest handling four-stroke chassis this side of an XR200. This agile feeling is the result of a combination of factors, including weight (claimed 257 pounds dry), how it carries that weight, and riding position. A low center of gravity and good ergos makes it easy for the rider to throw the bike into a turn, almost like a two stroke rider would. A nice thin seat, spot-on foam density, and good layout certainly contribute too. It'll literally run rings around ill handling older thumpers.

Husqvarnas of yore have always had long wheelbases, branding them as stable platforms but slow turners. The '98 410's 58.86 inch wheelbase is comparable to Husaberg's, shorter than KTM, but slightly longer (by about an inch) than Japanese platforms (YZ/WR, DR, KLX and XR). Our experience aboard shorter models (especially the KLX or XR) often found them to be quirky handlers in some situations (like sand whoops) and difficult to dial suspension action due to this shortness. The '98 Husky seems to have found a sweet compromise with its wheelbase as the 410 chas-

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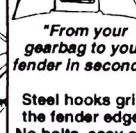
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Marzocchi 50mm Magnum fork works better than ever.  
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Stainless steel exhaust headers mated to dual aluminum silencers  
Gummy Michelin Enduro Comp III tires are good all around performers that you'll run the knobs off before switching  
Domino controls include an integral clutch perch/compression release lever with the quick adjust clutch feature.

sis is an easy turner and agile ride, more than up to the most technical of off-road obstacles.

The TE410 comes from the factory with the fork tubes protruding considerably (half inch or so) from the top of the triple clamp. At first you'd think that the bike was assembled on a Friday or something, however, it works right in this configuration, the front wheel staying put whenever it's supposed

to. We uncharacteristically left this adjustment alone. Our only handling complaint was a fork steering stop that severely limited the bike's turning radius. This was quickly cured however, with a little grinding wheel handiwork.

Good suspension contributes to the 410's handling prowess, although it won't be confused for any Japanese boingers. Suspension action is still all Euro—translation: it's much more taut than any of the Japanese thumpers, especially the soft rides of stock XR and DR models. In stock trim it works good in fast sand land, and remains in the hunt in the rocks. Originally it seemed too stiff for the rocks, especially the fork, however, subsequent break-in has had a noticeable positive effect on plushness. Allow time for breaking-in before running off to a suspension tuner..

With stock valving the 410 provides a stable platform that doesn't deflect or hunt for lines. Riders who race thumpers on a regular basis often point out that you can't fight a four-stroke in the rocks (instead, you've got to get comfortable with letting it find its own lines). This might be true with traditional four-stroke trail bikes, but this Husky either (a) finds and holds the sweet lines all the time, or (b) doesn't fight rider input like other less nimble thumpers. Either way, it's an easy ride when the going gets bony.

The 50 mm Zoke Magnum fork impressed us. Somehow Husqvarna has (again) managed to take the same hardware used by other manufacturers (most notably KTM) and make it feel different and work better.



The KTM comes with Magura tapered handlebars, very much like Answer Pro-tapers.

This Magnum fork is the same basic hardware used on '97 KTM models, ones which we spent considerable time with last year. To Husky's credit, their version of the fork doesn't pump up with air, blow seals (after nearly 1000 miles of riding), and the valving seems damn close to what's needed, too.

On the back end, however, we'll have to admit we haven't fully exhausted our fiddling with the Sachs shock yet. Action is good in both sand and rock lands, however the jury is still out on its adjustability (with clickers). The rebound adjuster works right, allowing dialing as needed, however, the high and low speed compression adjusters can be confusing and difficult to manipulate. Additionally, we found that the shock has the tendency to heat up (maybe more than normally) and fade as a result. Its been reported elsewhere that some European Team Husky racers have switched back to '97 model WP shocks in lieu of the '98's Sachs unit. However, we're guessing that an oil change and additional break-in/adjust-

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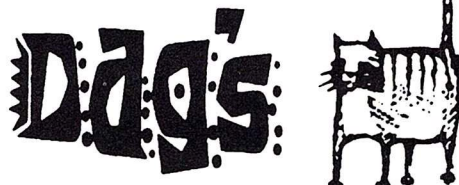
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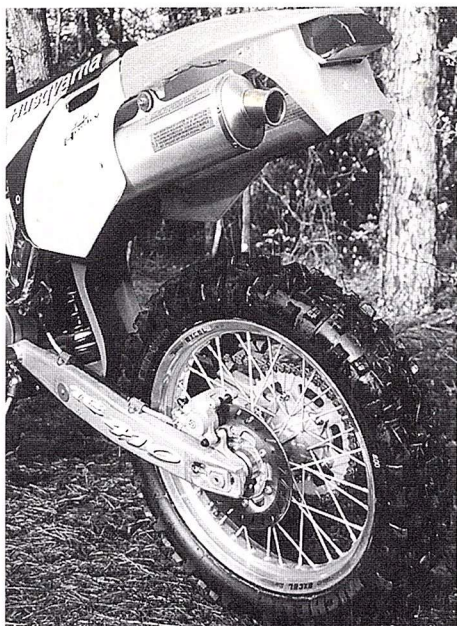
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Although there are probably good engineering reasons for the dual exhaust on the Husky, we'd like to see a single exhaust and less overall weight.

ment time should be sufficient to get things right on our end—something we look forward to reporting in a later write..

On the motivation side, Husqvarna is going to be the darling of thumper riders everywhere with this 410's power plant. It provides good, grunty XR-like low end power in a dependable water jacketed package. It might be a little soft on over-rev, but a performance exhaust system and air box tricks would likely cure that.

Born of its street legal roots, the 410's digital ignition generates a whopping 130 watts of accessory power, making it ideal for dual sport conversion projects. A new Dell'Orto 36mm pumper carburetor provides smooth, consistent power delivery with absolutely no coughing or hesitations, even with stock jetting.

Starting is about as dependable as any four-stroke that we've ridden. In two races, not once has poor starting habits bit us, even after throwing the bike away several times during last week's Ridge Run enduro. As with all four-strokes there is a starting drill. First kick cold start lightoffs were the norm with this starting drill: (1) Turn on the fuel and choke, (2) With the manual compression release lever pulled in, crank the motor through ten kickstarter strokes, (3) Give it one healthy kick and voila, the engine quickly runs up to a fast idle. Hot starting was pretty consistent too, almost always in one or two good boots, rarely requiring more than three. In all the time we've had the Husky, only once did it give us a lot of trouble starting and that was when the motor was really cooking (extended idling while taking down arrows after an enduro).

On the trail, the Husky motor lives up to its promises. It puts good tractor-like power to the ground, allowing snotty rock-strewn obstacles to be conquered without breaking a sweat. The 410's power proved more than enough to carry bike and rider up lengthy muddy uphill and through power robbing sand fields without the need for downshifting. Stock 15-48 gearing mated to a six speed gear box is more than a bit tall for

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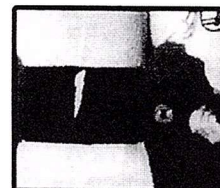
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eastern conditions. Dropping the countershaft cog to 14 get things down to where it's needed around here. A 50 rear sprocket might be the ticket in more technical venues. Clutch pull effort on the Husky is okay, but nothing to write home about. Shifting is good, with none of the false neutrals and other shifting woes of older Euro mounts. In all, it might well be one of the best all around thumper power plants currently produced.

#### KTM 400SC

Up until recently, the four-stroke dirt bike almost universally conceded trail bike status. Sure, many found their way into amateur competition, some even raced competitively, but for the most part, critical components like frames, suspension and brakes were barely up to the task and almost always second hand technology. Recent years have seen this all change, and KTM's debut of the 400SC model no doubt underscores that trend. Borrowing heavily from earlier EXC and DXC models, the SC is a slightly stripped version of those models, aimed at the expanding four-stroke motocross and hare scrambles market.

As with all KTM products, it's obviously a



rugged and well put together machine that will stand up to the rigors of racing and ask for more. The KTM is the longest (wheelbase) of any midsize four-stroke currently on the market. This alone stacks the deck against it in typical eastern woodland riding conditions. Additionally, the SC's 399cc powerplant is the same basic engine as found in a half dozen or so (with minor changes) KTM models. While this is great for reliability and maintainability, it also hints of a dated design with plenty of compromises. Nonetheless, a month in the saddle of this tuned race mount did turn up some surprises.

#### How it works

It didn't take long after slinging a leg over the 'SC to figure out that things were going to be considerably different aboard this KTM thumper. Motor wise, the 400SC power plant fires up easily enough, using the same cold start drill as the Husky. The left side kickstarter provides good leverage, making one or two kick hot lightoffs common place. Also similar, the KTM includes both a manual and automatic compression releases, although the auto decompression could be fooled on occasion, leading to near engine lockup during half-hearted boots. That's about where similarities end, however, as the KTM's motor, fitted with a free flowing KTM performance exhaust system (not stock), runs more like a Husaberg than a Honda. It produces great power, not near as much off

#### KTM 400SC Menu of Features

##### Sauerbraten

Magura tapered handlebars  
Plastic bash plate protects engine underside  
Minimal potential legalization headaches with integral master cylinder brake light switches, compact handlebar mounted multifunction accessory control switch, expanded wiring harness

##### Kraut

WP shock mated to conventional rising rate linkage suspension  
WP 50mm Extreme fork  
Aluminum subframe  
Proven SOHC, 4 valve head, 398cc displacement power plant  
Brembo stoppers  
Stainless steel KTM performance exhaust system includes matched header and wide flow silencer  
Michelin Enduro Comp III, 90/90-21 front, 140/80-18 rear  
Domino controls include an integral clutch perch/compression release lever with a quick-adjust clutch feature  
Resettable standard KTM trip odo

the bottom as the TE410 or XR400, but instead revving much higher, producing more peak horsepower. Clutch action is decent, without a hint of fade even under the most thoughtless abuse.

Among our test riders was former ECEA Enduro Champ Mark Spence. Spence's engine comments: "When ridden hard in technical, slow going trail, the motor's lack of bottom end becomes a liability. Its almost hard at times to get back into the meat of the powerband needed to go fast." The solution—don't slow down. On the intangible side, the sound of the open performance exhaust system would put a smile

(Continued on page 40)

# B & B

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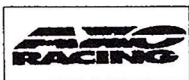
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\* Dirt Rider Magazine  
Editor Survey - June 1998

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Reader Survey - 1997-98

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# CURLY FERN ENDURO

Richard Lafferty survives a soaking at a last-minute Curly Fern

By Paul Clipper, Photos by Mark Uth and Jungle Dave

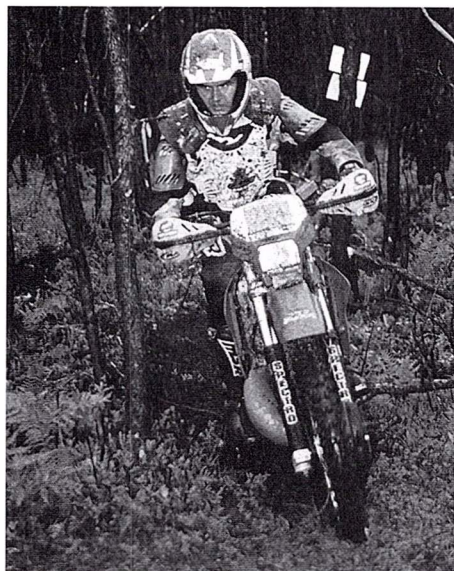
Atsion, NJ 5/17

**R**ichard Lafferty stayed on top of his KTM and as close to the top of his minute as he could, and aced the overall spot at a Curly Fern enduro that almost didn't happen. When the South Jersey Enduro Riders were told that the bulk of their course would have to be scrapped because of nesting turkeys, they immediately asked for and received permission to use whatever trails they could find on the opposite side of State Highway 206. The turkeys, of course, never cross the road, so there wasn't a problem on that side of the street. What followed was a trail scouting and cleaning frenzy the last five weeks before the event, and to the credit of the SJER and trail boss Kenny Lee Taylor, they not only wound up with an enduro, the club put together a real test of man and machine—with a little help from Mother Nature.

Lafferty, who is sponsored by Bromley Suzuki/KTM, MSR, Spectro, Dunlop, FMF, Arai and many others, won by virtue of a plain old faster pace, rather than domination of one single section or another. His closest competition came from reigning ECEA champ Fred Hoess (Bromley Suzuki, Answer, WER, Acerbis, FMF, Arai, Scott & Michelin), who chased hard but couldn't get luck on his side. Third overall went to Jack Lafferty Jr., sponsored by Husaberg USA/KTM, Arai, MSR, Trelleborg, motion Pro, Silkolene, Scott, Tech Tubes, Enduro Experts, Enduro Engineering, and Griffin Vehicle Service, who nearly matched Hoess check-for-check, but slipped by a point at one of the two major points-taking checks of the day.

The event was spiced up by nearly unrelenting rain in the weeks preceding. Fourteen straight days of rain ending a few days before the start helped raise the water table to about ankle height in much of the afternoon loop. This was definitely a factor on many scorecards, especially considering the general dryness of most South Jersey enduros this time of year. Basically it helped the riders who were savvy at picking lines and getting through, and it hurt the riders who let their attention flag.

The morning loop was a zero-point trailride for most of the field, especially the A and B ranks. Wanting to provide a fun ride as well as a contest, trail boss Taylor set the major speed average at the odd value of 22 mph. This computes to 1.1 miles every three minutes, which gave everybody the opportunity to just ride for most of the morning, and worry about timekeeping only at the possible check locations. Careful attention to tiebreaker seconds was the key in the a.m.,



Richard Lafferty never even noticed the mud on his way to the overall win.



Early in the p.m. loop everybody was shocked awake by a quick tight section that took points away from everyone, more from the sleepers among us. Lafferty was right on top of his game in this section, blazing through with a two minute loss, the only rider to squeak in under three. He was tailed in by brother Jack, who carded a three with 155 emergency seconds, compared to Hoess, who clocked out with a 3/168.

The troops were allowed back on time in the next transfer, and then checked in with an emergency check to a section few had



Anthony Tomasello had a High Point A ride going until a bad crash stopped him short of the finish.

ever seen before: the Black Forest. Richard wasn't ready to gamble, and checked in only one second into his minute. This gave him the most time possible to cover the section, and it was the right choice to make. Hoess and Jack Jr. seemed to be somewhat concerned by the check-in and walked off eight seconds or so coming in, and it may have cost them in the end.

The Black Forest was a romp through an old trail carved in a section of woods that burned badly four or five years ago. The main landscape feature is a burned-black tree trunk, occurring roughly every 36 inches over the entire tract. The undergrowth is about two feet tall and green, and there's no doubt it's a very disorienting place to ride—everywhere you look the landscape is identical! The area is also studded with a few tricky swamp holes that claimed a surprising number of victims. The trip through was broken up by two back-to-back checks that turned out to be decisive for everyone.

Rich Lafferty had no trouble through the section. "Water? What water?" he joked afterwards, but Hoess wasn't so lucky, digging himself into a small hole and losing precious seconds. Both riders made the first check in the section without major trouble, checking through with seven points each. Shortly afterwards, the gremlins took hold of Hoess, and he lost enough time to basically give Richard

*You know things are getting bad when you get down to the mustard.*

on the assumption that the afternoon would be just as easy; however the club had better plans.

I was fortunate to be riding on minute one, along with Mike McHale, Anthony Tomasello, Mike Beeler and Ron DeCaro, and what this meant was I really didn't need any timekeeping equipment. Beeler, Tomasello and McHale are extremely serious about their enduro riding, and they ride the possibles on the top of their minute. Once we passed a possible, they would roost off, and I wouldn't see them again until the next possible, as they were creeping up to it. Ron would usually hit a tree or two if the riding was tight, and I could catch up to him, but the others would simply disappear. It was fun; they're all business but they have a sense of humor as well. We aced the first half, and then prepared for the real points-taking in the afternoon.



the run, checking out with 11 minutes, 634 seconds to Lafferty's 10/623. Jack Lafferty Jr., meanwhile, lost what advantage he'd built earlier by losing an extra point at the mid-check, eight total, and then held on to nearly get Hoess by clocking out with 11/657. "Almost" only counts in hand grenades and horseshoes, however, and after the trail ride back to the finish Jack Jr. had to settle for third.

The Black Forest was well talked about after the run, both positive and negative. It was common knowledge before the run that the SJER had lost use of the land west of Route 206, which made it impossible to use the ultra-ignorant Bertino Swamp section. Without Bertino's, the common belief was that the club couldn't throw together anything tough, but then they found the Black Forest. This section would have been an easy romp had the ground been dry, but the extra rain had spiced the mudholes until passage was very tricky. Many of the competitors stuck themselves, including Meteor's Mike Barr, who buried his bike so thoroughly it took a pack of sweepers hours to dig it back out. I thought it would have been a great advantage riding on minute one, but it turned out once again that the best scores went to the smartest or luckiest riders. McHale got stuck, riding on my minute, while Lafferty spun right through, riding on minute 12. You either made it or you didn't, and not getting stuck really helped!

There was an epic battle going on between my minute mates for High Point A, meanwhile, as McHale, Tomasello, and Beeler traded it down hand to hand. First McHale met his early demise in the Black Forest, leaving him with a ton of points and a sore leg from kicking his thumper; and then it looked like

#### Curly Fern Enduro

Richard Lafferty KTM 19

#### Grand Champion

Mike Beeler Yam 25

#### High Point A

Craig Gaver KTM 32

#### High Point B

Jeff Barker Kaw 53

#### High Point C

#### AA

1. Fred Hoess Suz 21

2. Jack Lafferty Jr. Hbg 22

3. Bill Atkinson KTM 25

4. Rich Shirk Jr. KTM 29

5. Craig Shenigo KTM 34

#### A 125

1. David Bostrom Yam 28

2. John Roeske Kaw 30

3. Rob Farber Hon 34

4. Vic Chalow Yam 38

5. Greg Davies Yam 39

#### A 200

1. Tim Shepps Kaw 30

2. Jim McCommon KTM 32

3. Joe Tavani III Kaw 37

4. Todd Lockard Kaw 39

#### A 250

1. Chuck Stapleford Kaw 25

2. Rob Aldakimov Yam 26

3. Mark Marzalek Hon 27

4. Bob Solomon KTM 28

5. Scott Gribble Kaw 30

#### A Open

1. Frank Vanaman KTM 27

2. Jim Landvater KTM 34

3. Joe Galie Jr. KTM 38

4. Keith Mahon Hon 135

#### A Four Stroke

1. Craig Cossaboon Yam 29

2. Lewis Smith Jr. Hon 31

3. Mike McHale Yam 33

4. Joe Wallace Hon 34

5. Steven Larkin Yam 36

#### A Veteran

1. John Walter Suz 26

2. Jim Gungelman Yam 28

3. Rob Morris Suz 29

4. Eric Koeller Gas 32

5. Marty Graver Kaw 48

#### A Senior

1. Cliff Tenney KTM 28

2. Bruce Dengler Suz 30

3. Kevin Reed Hon 30

4. H. Stankiewicz Kaw 33

5. Dave Barlow Yam 37

#### A Super Senior

1. Jack Lafferty KTM 33

2. Scott Wolf Yam 35

3. Rich Trader KTM 37

4. Bob Agonis KTM 41

5. Pete Parlett Hon 44

#### B 125

1. Jerry Kitts TM 33

2. Ron DeCaro Yam 34

3. Jason Catlett Suz 35

4. Dan Stoppi Jr. Yam 39

5. Mario DePalma Suz 40

#### B 200

1. Geo. Mamounis KTM 41

2. John Castaldi Kaw 43

3. Kim Plummer Kaw 46

4. Sergio Bassani Kaw 51

5. George Jensen Kaw 52

#### B 250

1. Jeff Brown Kaw 35

2. Mike Tavani Kaw 36

3. Dave McGee Yam 37

4. John Shukovsky Kaw 39

5. David Nash Kaw 40

#### B Open

1. Rod White Jr. KTM 38

2. Michael Sharp KTM 42

3. Tim Gallagher KTM 47

4. Tom Blasscyk KTM 56

5. Brian Burke ATK 57

#### B Four Stroke

1. Rob Comber Yam 40

2. Chris Crull Yam 40

3. Charles Sullivan Hon 43

4. Kevin Plummer Hon 46

5. Al Zabroski Hon 50

#### B Veteran

1. Layne Foulk KTM 43

2. Mark Perry Yam 43

3. Wade Johnston Suz 44

4. Joe Dublas Kaw 44

5. Anthony Sutton Kaw 53

#### B Senior

1. Paul Clipper KTM 35

2. Eric Hartem Hon 37

3. Mark Trowbridge KTM 44

4. Jack Lewis Hon 53

5. Ritch Heisler Hus 60

#### B Super Senior

1. Jack Lurtsema KTM 44

2. Steve Hyde Hon 54

3. Lewis Newman Kaw 199

#### C 200

1. Matt Hurff Kaw 60

2. David Everett Kaw 94

3. Roy Harrell Yam 96

4. Michael King Yam 97

5. Jeffrey Harrison Kaw 107

#### C 250

1. Brian Carden Kaw 48

2. Steve Smith Yam 67

3. Jason Campbell Yam 77

5. S. Youncefski Hon 81

#### C Open

1. Trevor Davies KTM 73

2. John Whitaker KTM 117

3. Jay Reinert Suz 129

4. Robert Limmer KTM 157

#### C Four Stroke

1. Brad Pace Hon 69

2. Mark Schleeweis Yam 104

3. Chris Griebel Hon 108

4. Christian Crum Hon 129

5. Tom Keegan Kaw 147

#### C Veteran

1. Trevor Tudash Kaw 57

2. Paul Dengler Jr Yam 72

3. Marty Heisler ATK 80

4. Jeff Miller Hus 88

5. Jim Helyer Suz 90

#### Women

1. Jennifer Eyrich DNF

#### Masters

1. Joe Galie Yam 64

Tomasello would have it until a half-mile from the finish, when he took a bad crash, breaking his arm and causing a variety of internal injuries (he's fine now, although off the bike for a few months). Finally, it was Beeler who, leaving this trail of bodies behind, finished up with a 25-point loss for the day.

No such drama plagued the B High Point award, as Craig Gaver used the light weight of his KTM 200 to his advantage to drop a total of 32 points, the best in the B class. Finally, Jeff Barker was the overall winner of the C class, checking out of the C Vet class with a 53 point loss on his KX 250. □

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# CLASH IN CATRALAND

Norton takes the gold ring

By Cheri Alix

Fishhouse, NY 5/17

**A**fter years of dwindling attendance, the Capital Area Trail Riders made the course easy last year to draw back the riders. This year the riders were back with the largest turnout in several years, but the course wasn't as wide open and easy as last year. The 6.2 mile course was tight, twisty, and rocky, with all the hills added back in. Weeks of rain had also pelted the area, but thankfully the week prior to the event was dry and the track conditions were perfect. The starting area was actually dusty.

The first event got underway without any delay. Junior rider Ryan Dellaghelfa grabbed the holeshot with Jesse Berthiaume right behind. By the end of the first lap, Yamaha of Putnam/Thor/Acerbis/Torco's Berthiaume had the lead,



*This is all anyone saw of Norton all day. He took the lead right off the start, and pretty much held onto it all day long.*

with over two minutes on second place Justin Tucker. Derek Waters was in third, with Dellaghelfa back in the fourth place position. After three laps and just over one hour of racing, Berthiaume took the checkered flag with almost an eight minute lead over second place finisher, Dellaghelfa. Tucker finished back another two minutes in third place, with Waters settling for fourth. In the Mini class, Scott DeCosta took the class win with just over three minutes on second place William Rowe.

The second event to run was the Novice class, with 100 riders lined up for the three



*Brian Lawson rode a smooth race and finished third overall behind Norton and Pat Timothy.*

lap event. With a few sections deteriorating and the large field of riders to pass, the lap times were running close to 25 minutes, roughly one minute longer than the Juniors. When it was all over, Robert Maxon was the overall winner taking the win on his Honda 125.

After a half hour delay, to allow the club to reroute one small swampy section which became impassable during the Novice race, the main event was underway. Only nine riders were lined up on the front row when



*Jerry Randall picks his way across a sloppy spot on his way to third in the Senior A class.*

the flag dropped. Pub Racing/Factory Connection-backed Todd Levesque got the holeshot, followed by Valley Motorsport/Yamaha's Tom Norton and Putnam's Luke McNeil riding side by side through the first turn. Brian Lawson grabbed the inside sliding by both riders and taking over second place at the second turn. Patrick Timothy stuffed Norton and McNeil in a wide sweeper with Norton still coming out in third but Timothy taking over fourth moving McNeil back to fifth.

C-Cycle/Tsubaki/Answer/Spectro/Scott/Dunlop/Motion Pro/Dynoport/Bullet Proof-sponsored Norton moved passed Ronnie's Cycles' Lawson at the bottom of the first downhill, moving into second place right behind Levesque. Not a half mile later Levesque pulled over, allowing Norton to take over first place. Lawson also caught and passed Levesque. The two switched places several more times before Lawson finally got the jump on him in a rock garden. By the end of the first lap Levesque was back in fifth place. Norton had the lead with twenty five seconds on Timothy. Lawson was in third place with McNeil in fourth place.

"I spent the entire second lap riding alone," said Norton. "I was able to pick some awesome lines and avoid some big mudholes. I was trying to increase my time over Timothy but it was hot and I had to try to pace myself."

By the end of the lap, Norton had increased his lead to fifty three seconds over second place, Midtown Kawasaki's Timothy. Levesque was now in third place, just four seconds behind Timothy. Lawson was back in fourth with McNeil holding onto the top five.

"It was weird riding alone for the first two laps," said Timothy after the race. "It's hard to really know how hard to push. Levesque caught me at the end of the second lap and we battled back and forth. It got me motivated and I put on the charge. Todd would get by then I cut him off. I just didn't let up. I finally got in front of him and never heard him again."

The push from Levesque cut Norton's lead at the end of the third lap to just twenty five seconds. Levesque was still in third place back another minute. Lawson was in fourth place back another minute thirty seconds but fifth place, McNeil was closing in.

"I just can't seem to go fast at the start," Stated McNeil. "I tried holding it on today but I ended up cementing myself into a tree and decided to just back off. After a few laps though, I can really pick it up, and I just start picking off places."

As the riders went out for the final lap, it was Norton still out in front with forty five seconds over Timothy. Levesque DNF'd on the fourth lap, moving Lawson back into third place, down just over three minutes. McNeil was in fourth place back another thirty seconds. Ken Valentine was now in



<b>CATRA Hare Scrambles</b>		<b>Mini</b>		5. Bill Jolley	KTM	4. Brian Brewer	Suz	1. James Price	Hon	5. Matt Jalbert	KTM
Thomas Norton	Yam	1. Scott DeCosta	Kaw	<b>Novice 200</b>		5. Bruce Cloney	Hon	2. Casey Griswold	KTM	<b>Expert 200</b>	
<b>Overall Champion</b>		2. William Rowe	Kaw	1. Jared Wheelock		<b>Novice Senior</b>		3. Bob North	Yam	1. Jesse Berthiaume	Yam
Jesse Berthiaume	Yam	3. Darren Capote	Kaw	2. Mark White	Kaw	1. Charles Kennedy	Yam	<b>Amateur Veteran</b>		2. Chris Crispin	Hon
<b>A High Point</b>		4. Adam Simcock	Hon	3. James Menard	Yam	2. Carl Carlson	KTM	1. Martin Griff	Yam	3. Jim Senecal	Kaw
Joe Senecal	Yam	5. Ryan Sheehan	Hon	4. Jeffrey Ducharme	Kaw	3. Dennis Hart	Yam	2. Craig Pratt	Suz	4. Bob Santheson	Hon
<b>B High Point</b>		<b>Women</b>		5. Brett Chenail	Kaw	<b>Super Senior</b>		3. Dave Dzenutis	Hon	5. Drew Carpenter	Suz
Robert Maxon	Hon	1. Heidi Landon	Kaw	<b>Novice Open</b>		1. Frank Wortmann	KTM	4. Art Randolph	Yam	<b>Expert Open</b>	
<b>C High Point</b>		2. Dawn Shayer	Kaw	1. Stephen Sherman	Hon	<b>Amateur 250</b>		5. Dale Wager	Yam	1. Dan Salomone	KTM
<b>AA</b>		3. Dawn Silvia	Kaw	2. Jeffrey Grant	Hon	1. Joe Senecal	Yam	<b>Amateur Senior</b>		2. Pete Byrne	Yam
1. Tom Norton	Yam	<b>Novice 250</b>		3. Thomas Canesi	KTM	2. Josh Beebe	Hon	1. Chris Fahan	Hon	3. Roger Billharz	KTM
2. Patrick Timothy	Kaw	1. Richard Tovani	Kaw	4. Thomas Steward	Hon	3. Lon M. Peters	Suz	2. Robert Larson	Hon	<b>Expert Veteran</b>	
3. Brian Lawson	Yam	2. Russell Harper	Hus	5. Edward Ilves	KTM	4. Chris Chasse	Suz	<b>Amateur Four Stroke</b>		1. Robert Carlson	
4. Luke McNeil	Yam	3. Eric Poirot	Hon	<b>Novice Four Stroke</b>		5. Larry Silvia	Kaw	1. Jim Walsh	Suz	2. Marty Mears	
5. Ken Valentine	KTM	4. Robin Allsop	Yam	1. James Simonds	Hon	<b>Amateur 200</b>		2. Stace Ames	Hon	3. Steve Michalski	
<b>Junior</b>		5. Eric Kipp	Yam	2. Jim Green	Kaw	1. Keith Callahan	Hon	3. Brian Sebben	Yam	<b>Expert Senior</b>	
1. Jess Berthiaume	Yam	<b>Novice 125</b>		3. Robert Laroche	Hon	2. Todd Santheson	Hon	<b>Expert 250</b>		1. Glenn Dougherty	KTM
2. Ryan Dellagheffa	Yam	1. Robert Maxon	Hon	<b>Novice Veteran</b>		3. Mike Peristere	Yam	1. DJ Lis	Hus	2. Steve Kanya	KTM
3. Justin Tucker	Yam	2. Mark Griffin	Hon	1. John Hand	KTM	4. Charles Hathaway	Hon	2. Josh Hackett	Hon	3. Jerry Randall	Yam
4. Derek Waters	Yam	3. David Corlen	Hon	2. Charles Smith	Kaw	5. Michael Bush	Yam	3. Dave Simcock	CRE		
5. Adam Aborn	Yam	4. Jamie Sorel	Kaw	3. David Heath	Suz	<b>Amateur Open</b>		4. Chris Cramer	Kaw		

the fifth place position, down another minute thirty seconds.

The track was holding up real well but the lappers were now becoming a problem. They were obviously getting tired and getting stuck or falling in several of the rutted, muddy sections.

"I had to take several different lines and wait for fallen riders to clear the hills on the last lap, but I still managed to put a considerable amount of time on Timothy." Stated Norton after the race. "I really had a fun ride. The course was excellent."

Norton took his second win of the season with over a minute lead on second place finisher, Timothy.

"I had a few crashes on the last lap. It was almost lights out in one section. I was heading dead center for a tree but was able to catch it at the last second and just graze it instead. It could have been real nasty," exclaimed Timothy. "I just took it easy around the last section. I was happy with second."

Lawson took third overall for the day but not without a hard battle with fourth place finisher McNeil. McNeil caught Lawson on the last lap, trading places several times before McNeil got crossed up allowing Lawson to get away. Lawson was also having mechanical problems in the form of a broken shifter that left him stuck in third gear, making for a well-earned third place finish.

Rounding out the top five for the day was Ken Valentine, coming around just a minute thirty seconds behind McNeil. The Expert Class overall went to Yamaha of Putnam's Jesse Berthiaume. Berthiaume was dead last off the line but managed to pick his way through the pack within a few laps to take over the lead in his class. By the start of the final lap he had the lead in the Expert class taking the class overall with two minutes on fellow 200 class rider Chris Crispin. Crispin took first place in the Expert 200 class, with Jim Senecal finishing second.

VMR/Spectro/IMS-backed DJ Lis took first place in the Expert 250 class, with a one minute lead over second place Josh Hackett. MHR's Dan Salomone was the only rider in the Expert Open class to complete all five laps, earning him first place with Pete Byrne taking second.

In the Amateur class, it was B 250 rider Joe Senecal taking the class High Point. Senecal was the only Amateur rider to complete all laps. □

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# ON THE INCA TRAIL

Spinning some modern wheels into the heart of an ancient culture

By Charlie Williams

## Puerto Inca, Peru 5/98

**I**t is so nice to be back with my regular readers.

I got the chance to go on a dual sport adventure with the gang from Lotus Tours. You may have seen their ads in this magazine. Anyhow, I was invited along as a trip journalist and I would cover my expenses by writing several articles for different magazines. So I've been writing to a slightly out of tune audience, having to paint a glossy picture of a rugged trip. But you, one of the lucky ones who get this small magazine I call home, you will get the mostly uncensored, not too terribly edited version.

I start out in grade school geography class by seeing pictures of this mysterious place they call Machu Picchu. Later I would see pictures in National Geographic, or on TV. I knew Machu Picchu was one of the places I wanted to visit in my life. It seemed like an unobtainable goal right now—mostly unemployed, totally broke, pan handling for Sunday's entry fee. Then Burt Richmond from Lotus Tours contacted Paul, here at the magazine. Burt wanted a journalist to join one of his trips and invited Paul to go. Paul had to decline the offer but lucky for me, he told Burt that I could go in his place.

Four days later and \$200 dollars in preventative injections, I was on a plane to Peru, South America. The day after that we were riding around the Paracas National Reserve, on sand dunes 900 feet tall. We were riding Honda XR 600s. The sand dunes were very firm and the bikes would scoot right up all but the steepest faces. From the top you could see rugged coastline with waves crashing as far as the eye could see. Then you could plunge down the other side like you were falling down an elevator shaft and grabbing gears all the way. "I may be going to hell in a bucket, but at least I'm enjoying the ride."

This riding was unforgettable, the absolute most freedom I have ever felt on a bike. Up, over, around, left or right, any way you wanted to go. It would be possible to ride blindfolded here, letting the bike roll with the dunes in a ballet of power and freedom.

Our small group agreed over dinner that this riding would never be topped, and we were all very happy. Flavio Salvetti, our guide for the next two weeks, smiled too;



*High in the Andes, a rainbow hovers over Machu Picchu. This is the sort of thing I'm just not going to see hanging around Indianapolis.*



*In a typical village, hanging out with the kids.*

but he smiled because he knew what was next in store for us.

The next morning we boarded a private speed boat and took a ride out in the Pacific Ocean to the Ballestas Islands, about six miles from the coast. We got to see hundreds of sea lions in and out of the water. Two types of dolphins, one full size, the other type were half size. We saw a pair of nesting Humbolt penguins, and another 100 kinds of birds I could not identify.

Then it was back on the bikes. We headed south down the coast for 180km. Along here there was a cliff plunging down to the sea, 100 feet tall. Fishermen had tiny pathways worn in the side, allowing them to get to the beach and fish. At one place, called the "Cathedral," nine foot waves curled up and made perfect tubes that ran out of sight. Later, once the cliff tapered off, we stood where the ocean would spray 30 feet in the air, being shot through cracks in the rock.

After lunch we rode up to a pile of rocks with a broken Inca Kola bottle sitting on top. Flavio checked his compass, we turned away from the ocean and out into the Ica desert at 70 degrees. Here there was no road and we had to cover 60km of open desert. Eventually this course intersected with a mountain range made up of sugar sand. We rode the base of these dunes for 15 miles.

We worked our way south for a couple of days until we reached the village of Puerto Inca. This picturesque seaside village would have been a starting point for one of the Inca Trails. From Puerto Inca, runners could deliver fresh sea

food to Cuzco and the Main Inca himself. This was a distance of some 600km, and a journey that would take us three days of hard riding.

First we struck out across the Ica Desert, towards a town called Nazca. This town is famous for its line drawings and geoglyphs. Those gigantic art works, only visible from the air. One looks like a monkey, another like a spider, even one that looks like an astronaut. Speculation is they were used to communicate with outer space. Why not? After seeing how advanced the Inca people were in other fields of expertise, I would not be surprised.

Across the river up on high ground were the Nazca Burial Tombs. Here lay the bones of thousands of Inca people. You could not pick up a handful of sand with-





"No, we got no guinea pig today, but I got some fresh rabbit for you!"

out human bones sticking out of it. Scientist unearthed several mummies, and have them on display. They sit there like their families left them 700 years ago, hair and teeth still intact. Their empty eye sockets stare up at us while we line up to take pictures.

At this point of the story the voice of one of my tour guides keeps running through: "You had animal sacrifice and you and human sacrifice." I put a great deal of concentration towards making my goal, Machu Picchu. I became very cautious, knowing any mistake would stop me short of my goal. Not all of us will get to see what lies ahead. Most will be stopped at the end of this article. Others will get closer, but get stopped by any number of reasons. I had mine. "Human sacrifice and animal sacri-

fice."

We had just taken off from putting on the rest of our warm clothing. We were very high on the West Side of the Andes. I clicked the bike into 5th gear and just settled comfortably on the seat when the voice, "Human or animal..."

CRASH!

Two large white-faced sheep dove off the ditch bank and into the side of my bike. I only saw them for a second, but I watched in horror as the first sheep crashed into the spokes of my front wheel. Ahead of the forks, its head was twisted forward, its neck broke and momentum threw its body up and around into my leg and my own momentum. Everything played in slow motion, hitting a sheep on a desolate road in South America at 50 mph? Sounds like a career ending trip to the pavement. Had the sheep been half a step ahead I would have crashed into him. I would have gone down instantly like this, but luckily the bike had enough momentum, enough gyroscopic force, enough precession, that the bike didn't flinch or wobble one bit, I didn't fall or even look back. My leg had enough pain to keep my focus for the first few moments then the sheep would have been too small to see, so I never looked back. "Animal sacrifice."

Not everyone gets hit by a rogue sheep, not every one needs that. For some, just the challenge of the language barrier is enough to make their trip "epic." But I put a lot of emphasis on this goal, and I was beyond a trip. I was on a quest. I was playing with bigger chips, I had bigger challenges. I was seeking bigger rewards than just a new T shirt.



The beach is endlessly long, desolate, nearly unpopulated and laced with the most incredible views you could ever imagine.

The sheep sacrifice seemed like the crescendo of any trouble I might have had. Now the Gods were smiling on me and offering their finest. We came up short of daylight the day we rode to Cuzco. The XR headlights are mainly decorative, and we were just creeping along in the dark on a wet twisty road full of cars, trucks, buses, people, cows, dogs, sheep, and chickens. Treacherous conditions. We rounded the umpteenth millionth switchback turn for the day and BOOM, something magic hap-

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pened. The full moon had risen between the mountains, and the twinkling lights of the Imperial City of Cuzco lay in the valley below us. The moon lit up our road like it was broad daylight, and we sliced through traffic and raced to the center of town, Plaza de Armas. This would be our headquarters for the next few days.

Cuzco is the coolest town I've ever seen. It's where the hippies went after Jerry died. Hippies of all nationalities peruse the streets and haunt the bars at night. In a juke joint named Ukukus I heard one of the best bands I've ever heard. I danced the Watusi all night long. These guys were rocking! The one guy played a plywood box, but I never could figure out their name or where they were playing the next night.

The streets were just like a Dead show, with vendors selling everything under the sun. Wool sweaters were the best buy and I got mine on right now. Sure, I itch and smell like an unwashed llama, but I look cool. Tourists gather from all over the world here in Cuzco. They are all making their personal pilgrimage to Machu Picchu.

From Cuzco we had to leave the bikes and take the train through the Sacred Valley of the Inca, along the banks of the raging Rio Vilcanota river to the town of Aguas Calientes. Here we boarded a bus for the final miles to Machu Picchu. This is



*Our first day of riding in the sand dunes was incredible. This picture only gives you the merest hint of how vast and empty the land is.*

a magnificent place, a stone city built on top of a mountain buried deep in the Amazon Jungle. Speculation has it that during the Spanish Invasions of the 1500s, well, for whatever the reason, the Spaniards did not find Machu Picchu, so they did not destroy it like so many of the Inca towns. The Spaniards were looking for hidden gold and trying to smash the Inca peoples' beliefs, and convert them to Christianity.

Machu Picchu laid buried under heavy jungle for hundreds of years until American explorer Hiram Bingham rediscovered the Forgotten City in 1911.

Walking around this living museum I didn't feel anything different, like I had hoped when I started the quest. I felt almost a little disappointed, walking around with all the other soft, white, out of breath, sweating tourists. I had traveled so far on my own, then was plopped on the tourist train. Two days later, while we were riding the bikes back out of the jungle, it dawned on me that I needed to finish my quest completely by hiking the Inca trail, and by hoofing it down into Machu Picchu. I had to get there the hard, slow way to really learn to appreciate it, just like riding a motorcycle to Cuzco rather than simply flying in. So that night back in Cuzco I signed up for a four day, 45km hike on the Inca Trail. I changed my airline tick-

ets and rented a backpack. I bought a sun hat and four liters of water. I said goodbye to my motorcycle friends, and the next morning boarded a bus with a whole new group of people to break-in to my peculiarities.

The bus dumped us off at the end of the road. There were 10 hikers, one guide and five porters carrying our tents and food. The porters took off at a breakneck pace, and we didn't see them until that night when we straggled into our little tent city. It is not the length of the hike that is so tough, it is the altitude and three passes you cross to make the trip. The highest

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pass is 12,500 feet and the others are slightly lower. One section had over 5,500 stone steps. Each one hand made by the Inca department of transportation. It is a rugged trip, hiking all day and camping at night. I was already tired of Peruvian food after two weeks of riding with a luxury tour, but now I'm getting mediocre Peruvian food.

After three days of hiking we arrive at the hostel. I had no idea what to expect. It turns out this is the last good spot to camp before the final day hike. So all the hikers congregated here. Maybe 100 people were here. It was great! We had a great celebration party, it was a party for each and every one of us who had hiked the trail. We had music going and we were doing some kind of Peruvian square dance. Round and round we would go, then under the bridge of hands and out the other end and back around. This went on until late at night, and not everyone slept in their own tent that night.

The next morning we got up at 4:30 so we could make the hike to the Sun Gate and get there by dawn. The Sun Gate is the first time we get to see Machu Picchu from the trail. Just like so many times on this trip, the Gods smiled on me again. This morning there was a beautiful rainbow that ended right in the center of Machu Picchu.

The Sun Gate is another of the Inca marvels. It is used in the Inca solar calendar, the other part is two miles away in Machu Picchu. I'll try to explain. The first day of



*Me and the crew, posing in the jungle. We all saw the most amazing things, and had a great time riding in Peru.*

the Inca New Year is June 21st (our first day of summer). Well on June 21st the sun will shine through the pillars of the Sun Gate and then the beam of light will strike a monolith there in the Sun Palace and the shadow cast splits yet another rock and this phenomenon marks their first day of summer. The farmers used this information, and it also marked the biggest celebration of the year, even now the "Inti Raymi" or "Sunfest" is one of the best parties in the world. Madi Gras is for amateurs.

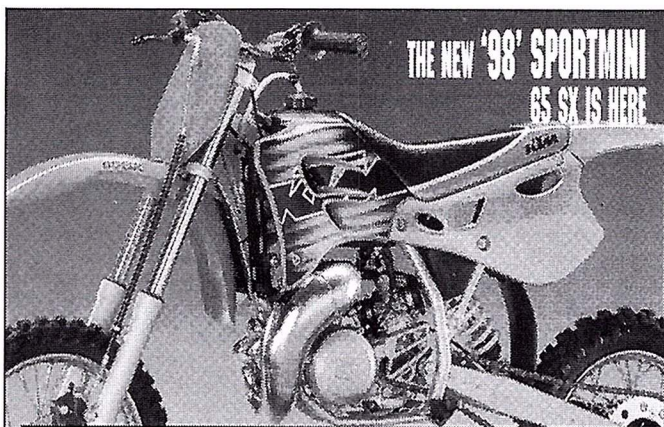
But think about how many years of study it took the Inca people to decide what day. How many times was it cloudy when they

were trying to measure it? While we were there the clouds swept around so fast, sometimes above you and sometimes below you. But after all these years, and after all the earthquakes, after all the doom and destruction, this clock still works. So the Inca people understood their astrology.

Now you need to look at some of the stone work. Gigantic stones cut and fit together so close you couldn't penetrate with a cigarette paper. I stood looking at a rock that fit perfectly on all 32 different sides. I laughed to myself at the thought we still use paper gaskets in our bikes. Part of the mystery about the stone work is how? The Incas did not have hard enough steel to break stone. They had gold and silver but these are not tools. Speculation has it the masons would take a large rock and

find its natural crack lines, deciding how the stone should be broken. They then built a fire, heating the rock until it split, hopefully along the intended crack. Then they would drive wooden wedges into the crack and soak them with water, the wedges would swell up and further split the rock. Then I guess they would put the rough cut stone in place and finish cut them. Here they would use harder stones as tools and chip away the granite until it was perfect. Sure, the statuary of Italy is beautiful, but mere toys compared to the Inca works.

I want to tell you about the Inca farmers next. They were experts, like the masons.



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The farmers built terraced fields on the sides of mountains. Some of these still stand, and are works of art in themselves. With the terrace system they discovered that each level held its own temperature, so each level contains dirt most compatible with that temperature.

Today Peru boasts at having over 3,000 kinds of potatoes. How? The Inca farmers understood enough about husbandry to hybridize potatoes. This information is in evidence. It makes me wonder what they really knew. Like in the medical field. The Inca people practiced trepanation, a surgery where a hole is bored in your head to achieve enlightenment. If you are not familiar with trepanation I suggest reading the works of Joseph Mellen and Amanda Fielding. The Inca people had such an understanding with this surgery they have a special type of ceremonial knife just for

this job, and many skulls have been found with a gold or silver plate covering a hole in the head. I guess that would be one better than a tattoo or a nose ring.

We saw so many things, and so many things happened I can't even begin to tell you. All I can do is feed you enough information to make you think. Like, just how would you go about breeding potatoes? "Well, I'd put lipstick on one and soak the other in vodka."

Next time you are driving along and you see a farmer out working the earth from his hydraulic fingertips, flag the big Deere down and ask him to explain to you how to breed potatoes. Fat chance.

Next time you look at a stone building, look and see if the stone had been cut with a saw and put in place with a crane, or was it drug into place by 500 toiling workers and polished by hand.

Look at the daily paper, at all the crazy killings, and then at how many people take attitude drugs, then you might agree some people need an extra hole drilled in their heads.

You need a hole in your head if you don't try to go on a trip like this. Oh, it was so good. Let me tell a few stories now:

On the hike was an Italian guy, he had so much style. Not only was he a good hiker and carried his own weight, he also carried things with him to ensure a quality event: Cigarettes, both store bought and the kit to roll your own; cans of beer. He carried an espresso maker and Italian coffee, a bottle of expensive Italian wine, a block of cheese, a can of ham, a package of crackers, pistachios, licorice, all kinds of altitude medicine, coca leaves. He was a lot of fun.

Along on the ride with me was a woman, she was older than I am. This is a touchy subject, a lady's age and all, but she rode the same bike as the rest of us, XR600. She could not touch the ground and had to rock the bike side to side just to keep balance. She learned how to get the bike parked on the side of the hill where she could get on the pegs and start the bike better than all the guys, and she was such a good learner that I quit teaching her any tricks because she was getting too fast for me to pass.

Another special moment was every moment in Cuzco. There were so many Volkswagens, beetles and busses. Even the old split window vans that are so valuable here, were on every corner. I want to ride a bike back down there, buy a van, fill

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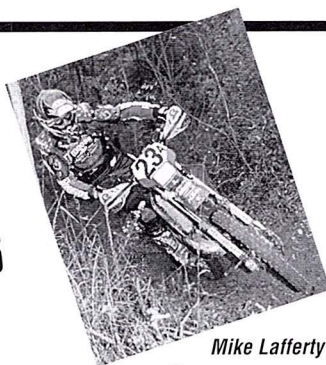
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it full of sweaters and drive the old VW home. Now that would be an adventure.

But it would not be as pleasant as this tour. Lotus took care of every detail, we were pampered every step of the way, the finest Peru has to offer. Many of the places I have traveled I could make the trip on my own, Peru is not one of them. Usually somebody speaks my language, but we would have been lost without our guide in Peru. It was not just the language either. How about a country with no road signs? How about restaurants disguised as homes? At one point I was leading the group, and the cold rain had driven me indoors. Not being able to read a sign I wound up standing in someone's living room, they went ahead and served me coca tea and took care of me but I was still in the wrong building. Flavio finally came along and explained to me the restaurant was really next door and I was standing in someone's home. I would have said "Gracias" in a loud Texan voice. The residents just smiled and shook their heads. "Loco."

Lotus Tours is based in Chicago. Lotus is connected with Flavio Salvetti and his company Inca Moto. Inca Moto is located in Lima, Peru, just minutes from the airport. Inca Moto owns eight new XR600 Hondas. The bikes are in top shape, and the driver of the support truck, Todo Oscar, is a qualified mechanic and took care of the bikes' minor needs. We started on new Pirelli tires and we got to ride as hard as we wanted. It turns out Flavio has raced all over this area in national events and he rode the Acerbis Inca Rally, winning many prizes. Flavio knows this region, so he can choose the best lodging. One place we stayed was a working winery, and another was a 15th century Spanish home.

Flavio has done this trip many times, he can foresee where ignorant gringos like me will have difficulties. I can see Flavio now rubbing his head thinking he needs to put a leash on me if I don't quit buying souvenirs. From the minute you step off the plane to the minute you step back on to go home, Flavio has someone there to help you. This is a tour, not a race, but the distances you have to cover in a day to reach the next village do require some hustle. Especially when something goes wrong.

Something went wrong one day. Flavio's face is turning purple right now. He can't turn red. We were crossing the Ica desert one day and came across a small stream. The plan was to cross it and continue on to the coast, both the bikes and the four-wheel drive support truck. Doom. The regular crossing had been washed away by El Nino flooding, so we had to try another place. The truck drove in and got locked up on a series of giant stones and was stuck in the river. Deep enough it was up over the tires, and we must have been 75 miles from the nearest mud brick building. I thought we were done, this was our new home. For two weeks we would sit here waiting for a tow truck and fending off the buzzards. But we rallied together, pushed and pulled, dug out stones and rolled boulders, and we finally pushed the little truck back up on high ground. It was an awesome achievement, and it felt like we had set one of those giant Inca stones, but what it really meant was we had gained our freedom. Now that I look back, there was never any doubt in Flavio's mind. The

truck was coming out of the river.

Something else that would happen every day: Every time we went shopping there was never correct change. If an item was four solas, and you tried to pay with a five sola coin, the shopkeeper would not have change, and he would have to close the shop and go next door to get your change. While he was gone you would realize that the coin he could not break was worth about a dollar and a half. A 100 sola note would rouse a crowd of people to look at it, and the note was only worth about 30 Americans. Sometimes just for fun, while the shopkeeper was next door I would pick up another item just to screw up the change thing again. What fun I can have.

Peru is a wonderful place to go adventure motorcycling, and Lotus Tours did a wonderful job of organizing and running the tour. I personally recommend you trying to

make a similar journey. Sure, it's expensive, but I've been at dinner parties where the bill was higher than my tour package. Besides, life is too short to worry about the money. Time is the most valuable commodity; so take some time and call Lotus and request some information on their upcoming adventures. Stick it to the refrigerator door, and every time you go get a beer you will be reminded that you could be one of the lucky souls to make a journey like mine. This trip was the most rewarding and gratifying event of my life.

Lotus Tours can be contacted at 1644 North Sedgewick, Chicago IL 60614, or (312)951-0031. For those electronically connected, the E-mail address is lotus-tours@juno.com. Look for their Web site at <http://www.lotustours.com>. Call today, I'm glad I did. □

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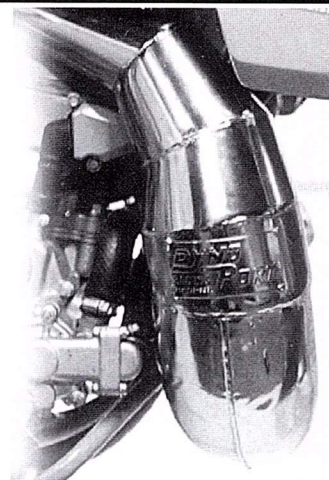
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# "Not Just Any Sunday"

Not just any Monday and Tuesday, either. What life would be like as a professional trail rider.

By Paul Clipper

October Mt., MA 6/2

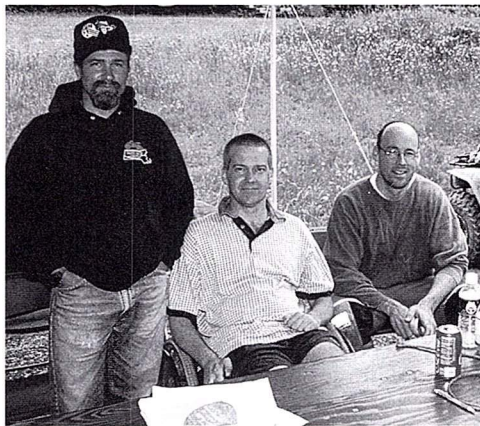
It's Tuesday night, and the mosquitoes are biting fierce, but I don't care. All I'm going to do is pump up the Coleman a little brighter, hope the car battery keeps this laptop running, and hammer out some words to meet my deadline, and then in the morning I'm going to get on the bike again. It doesn't matter that the wheel bearings on the bike are wobbling like a Big Wheel on December 27th, and it also doesn't matter that my left wrist is throbbing like someone is stabbing me with a soldering iron. I think there's something broken in there, but I don't care. I finally figured out what I need in life to be truly happy.

I'm going to become a professional trail rider.

Oh sure, you thought that's what I've been doing all along. I get all these bikes to ride, I get to go to all these exotic places. The trouble is, at the same time I have to labor eight hours a day to get a magazine out. Sundays have always been a sort of a joy/panic combination—the joy of getting to ride a bike in an enduro, or out trail riding somewhere special, but at the same time there's the panic of trying to get the work finished before I left, and then panicking as I tried to catch back up afterwards. All the work was taking the joy out of riding, but I didn't realize it until now. I just spent the last three days on a good bike and riding, and for once I actually feel great again. If I go back, I'll have to get back to work; so I've decided to live here in the van and ride every day. It's the only way to be truly happy, I can see that now.

But, before the lamp runs out of gas, let me tell you about my long weekend.

The whole trip began with the usual panicked deadline frenzy, culminating with me shipping out the July issue early on



Wes Clark, Art Bazanchuk, and Lee Helliwell of the Knox Trail Riders at a special benefit ride for Art on Sunday.

Saturday afternoon. If you've never been in the business, you don't really know what this is like, but take my word it's painful; like five or six days of non-stop work and worry, wondering where the next ad is coming from, wondering if you can actually fill all the pages allotted, and finally trying to figure out what you're going to cut 'cause it won't all fit. These are 12 hour days, and along with it you have to deal with everything else that happens, like the car breaking down, the kids needing things for school projects, the basic problem of keeping yourself fed and somewhat clean.

Then, somewhere in there is the basic problem of getting a bike prepped for a three-day ride, and I don't know about you, but my bikes always seem to be waiting for some kind of semi-major parts replacement. Even this time, when I loaded the bike I noticed that the rear wheel bearings were as sloppy as I ever like to have them, but I just figured I'd keep the axle tight and hope for the best. Long about ten o'clock Saturday night I crawled into bed and entered an exhausted sleep.

Five o'clock in the morning the adventure started. I jumped out into the van and started the four-hour drive north to a Sunday trail ride, ironically at a place just five minutes down the road from where I lived last summer. If I hadn't moved, I could have slept until eight. So much for forethought.

The ride was a charity benefit for Art Bazanchuk, a hare scrambles rider from southwestern Mass., one of the Knox Trail Riders, who noticed things were

getting a little funny a couple of years ago, and started seeing doctors when he was not only having trouble riding, he wasn't walking very well, either. He was eventually diagnosed with Lou Gehrigs Disease, otherwise known as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, or ALS. It's the same disease suffered by Steven Hawking, the famous physicist, and there is no cure, as of yet. Art's old hare scrambles chums wanted to do something for him, so they laid out a 30 mile "fun" loop on some private land in the southern Berkshires, and spread the word around.

The result was an estimated 150 riders turning out, and they were all given the chance to ride as many laps of a 30 mile loop that they wanted. I arrived at about 10 a.m., and quickly entered and suited up for the trail.

It wasn't very long before I figured out that what we were being treated to was very nearly the cream of what made the last part of last year's Berkshire Mudslinger



New England has the kind of scenery that you only see in, well, New England.

enduro so enjoyable. It was a little bit of excellent trail, and a good helping of prime New England rocks, roots and ruts to spice things up. Within the first half-mile I remembered that this was the first time I'd ridden in New England this season, and that it would be a really good idea to back off and get acclimated to the terrain again, instead of trying to race forward to where I caught up to someone I knew. Somewhere in there, I believe I whacked a tree with the handguard, cracking whatever it is that I cracked in my wrist; which further convinced me to cool it. After all, I still had two more days of riding ahead of me.

The riding was great. Thirty miles of



Our riding group on Sunday. If you want to join this crowd, you'll have to work for an MSR dealer and get yourself invited to ride.



buzzing through the woods, with plenty of technical, tight, nasty enduro trail to get the juices flowing. I was trying out a new bike, a two-stroke that I estimate to be about 50 pounds lighter than the thumper I campaigned last year, so I was loving it. I ran into Dave Gunn out there on the trail, he wasn't exactly loving it. He's still trying to tune his XR400 to where it will start easily for him, and also he was having a little trouble with the tightness of the trail. "This isn't anything like the GNCCI!" he growled, from underneath his bike in one little swill hole (to be fair, I'll note here that at the GNCC race the next weekend he won the Open A class, so you know he still knows how to ride.)

I figured I had tempted fate enough by taking one loop, and aside from knocking a tree hard enough to jink my wrist, I had few problems. It would be a good warm-up for the next two days, so I sat back and socialized while the club raffled off a number of great prizes. Sponsors of the event included Spectro, Kevin's Cycle, Fox Racing, Valley Motorsports, Aldo's Harley, the Goodwin Hotel and Executive Auto Group, as well as Hellion Designs. The event was masterminded and put on by Wes Clark and the Knox Trail Riders, and Art was there and enjoying it, in spite of his illness.

It was a great day, but there was still plenty to do. I left the event site and headed over to the old homestead, unloaded and washed the bike. My old roommate Steve met me there, and we hooked up with a couple of friends and went to dinner in Northampton, a very happening college town north of Springfield. After some epic Italian food I said *arrivaderci* and headed



*How cool is it to be trail riding and have Malcolm Smith helping you get up a hill?*

north, to Brattleboro, Vermont.

This was where I'd meet the group I'd be riding with the next two days. On the way up, I passed through a fairly nasty thunderstorm, but I didn't give it much thought until the next morning, when news of the tornadoes that hit the region was all over the news. Ignorance is blissful, as they say, and since none hit close to us, we were riding as scheduled.

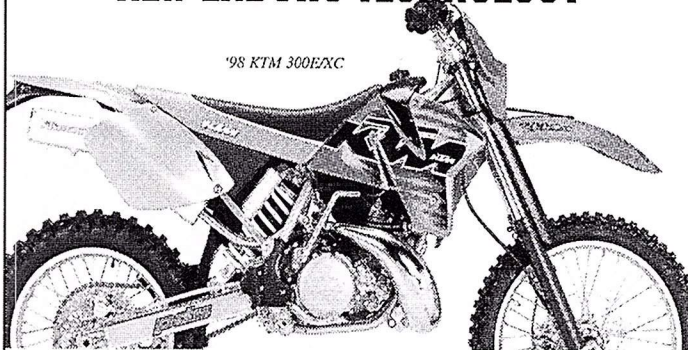
The event this time was something I truly hope becomes an annual event. It's called Not Just Any Sunday, and it's an invitational ride with Malcolm Smith and the brass

from MSR. In order to get invited, you have to be an MSR dealer, and it seems you have to meet some sort of sales quota. It wasn't an issue with me, because I was fortunate enough to be an invited member of the press. It might be long hours, but this job certainly has its perks!

There were 45 of us in attendance, roughly. Since there were many different experience levels the MSR people split the group up into A, B and C riders. I hung in with the best group, the B riders, and the ten of us were more than pleased when Malcolm opted to ride with the B's for the start of the ride. The A group at rides like this tend to be a bunch of weekend racers who want to cover ground way too quickly, and see how badly they can hurt themselves. It's like being in a pack of snapping, snarling hyenas, hurtling down the trail, and even Malcolm knows they're to be avoided until attrition thins their ranks somewhat (case in point: two of the shop guys in the A group were nicknamed The Bruise Brothers for their antics).

Both days' rides were masterminded and "trail bossed" by NETRA vice president Mike Stone, who is a life-long trail riding fanatic who has traveled by dual sport bike far down into South America alone, and is extremely active with the Berkshire Trails Council, who maintain all the forest trails in western Massachusetts. For this first day, Mike checked out and cleared the NETRA Vermont Loop #3, a route-sheeted NETRA trail ride loosely based on the old Red Fox turkey run. We had 87 miles to travel on this first day of riding, and in order to make it by nightfall we had to get an early start, which

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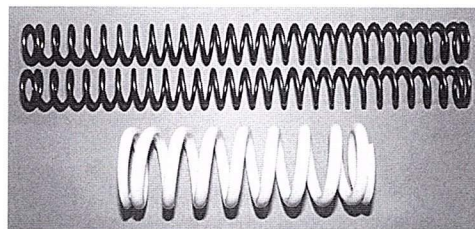


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we did.

It only took a tenth of a mile to see what sort of effect the previous night's rain had on the countryside. It was slime! Wet mud and water running down the trails, liberally sprinkled with Vermont boulders. I had to laugh, thinking that the riders from out of the region were seeing New England in all its glory. We kept up a good pace, following Malcolm, who was following Mike, but thankfully it wasn't so fast as to be risky. We left that to the A group.

In 87 miles of riding we covered a lot of area, and there were plenty of great trail sections during the day. Two things really stand out for me, though. The day before had been a great chance to get acclimated to the new bike and the northern terrain, so I was warmed up and feeling good early on. Malcolm was enjoying it as well, but late in the morning we were stopping way to often, and I could see it was getting Malcolm a little itchy. I decided to hang close to see if there might be a breakaway, and sure enough, at the start of one section our leader pulled over once again, and Malcolm went right on by.

I wasn't about to miss the chance to chase a living legend, so I jumped in behind and held on. I heard a four-stroke fall in behind me, and knew it was Jim Dey from Montgomeryville Cycle, who had been riding close by all along. The three of us freight-trained into this section, and Malcolm was wicking it up. I found myself hoping it was a long stretch of trail, and then started thinking about the scene in On Any Sunday where the camera is following Malcolm around as he wins the Elsinore GP. This one shot is of Malcolm passing a guy on the



*Like all good rides, there were some tricky places along the way. That's okay, this is good bench racing material happening here!*

course, while the narrator is saying something like "This guy is about to learn first hand that when Malcolm passes you, it's foolish to try to stay with him," as the guy throws it away on the pavement. I could see myself stuffing it into a tree, chasing Mr. Smith.

The trail changed character after a bit, and I was pleased to see that it was turning nice and gnarly. Soon we found ourselves in a downhill two-track that had deteriorated over the years into a rock-filled ditch. There was still plenty of mud on hand, and water

runoff from uphill was flowing merrily down as well. Beautiful! To cap things off, we had caught up to the C group, and there were riders stopped here and there in the ditch, like slalom poles on a ski run. Malcolm never missed a beat, nor did he modify his pace, and it was sheer joy following his line, through the mud and rocks and water, and in and out of the stalled riders on the path. Now I was thinking that one quick mistake on my end and he'd be gone and out of sight in seconds, but I held on for all I was worth. It was the best riding of the day, but it didn't last—at the bottom of the gully we crossed a stream and had to jump up a snotty, root-bound bank on the other side, and I stalled it. Two quick kicks and I was going again, but in that flash of time there was no more Malcolm, not even a wisp of smoke!

The guy is smooth. Still smooth. Fifty-seven years old, complaining about his age in the morning, and riding with a bruised arm from some sort of trail riding mishap the week before, and even if you're on top of your game you'd better not blink, or he'll disappear. Two miles down the dirt road there he was, with his patented ear-to-ear grin, saying "That was fun!" Neat, Malcolm.

We had a great feast that night, and in the morning I rolled out before dawn, determined to check out my bike. Our ride for the day would be happening nearly two hours south and west of us, and I knew exactly where. Mike Stone planned to show us all the Greylock enduro trails, so I wandered in that direction looking for a quarter car wash. Found one in Hadley, Mass., and cleaned off the Jackpiner. It was pretty obvious that the rear wheel bearings were

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spent, but I figured there was at least one more day left in them. Besides, hanging around until the closest shop opened, which was Valley Motorsports in Northampton, would put me late for arrival at the ride, and this one I didn't want to miss. I lubed the chain and continued heading south.

We had an option to do either the easy, short loop in Beartown State Forest, or the longer, rougher loop in October Mountain. Malcolm and the rest of us with any strength left opted for the long loop, but a fair group of riders went for the Beartown loop. Malcolm was interested, mostly because the trails in October Mountain were used in the Six Days in 1973, and he won the Silver Vase there as a member of the American ISDT team. We kept kidding him about remembering the trails, a virtual impossibility after 25 years. He did remember one of them, though.

October Mountain is a rocky, rugged place; so rough that after a while you start wondering about your spokes. I had already busted one out the day before, tangling with an unseen cut-off tree limb, and I wasn't anxious to blow the rest of them out. Still, the riding was so good it was hard not to push it. Down here, it seemed the rain hadn't been as fierce as it was in Vermont, and too we'd had an extra day for the trails to dry out. There were still some slippery spots here and there, but on the whole it was relatively dry.

In the eight months since the enduro I had pretty much forgotten what the hills were like in October Mountain, and the best word to describe them is deceptive. You think you're on a level two track, and then all of



Malcolm sticks a screwdriver in my arm because I tried to pass him in the event.

a sudden you start running out of horsepower. The trail tilts up, and your back tire starts scrabbling for traction. They're not the kind of hills where you'd absolutely have to turn around and try again, but if you stop you have to pause and gather your thoughts for a second, take a breath and then easy on the clutch climb up farther. Give it too much gas and the back end will probably take a vicious hop. Tricky!

The trail Malcolm did remember was the Bone Trail, so called by Irwin Moiseff, one of our guides for the day. They say it's Irwin's favorite trail, and I can see why. At one time it was a two-track uphill jeep trail. It must have been somewhat rocky then, but over the years rainwater had washed all of the dirt off of it, and now it is a six-foot wide rock-filled ditch, not a patch of dirt in sight. Irwin said one year they ran an enduro up this trail, and about halfway up was where the enduro simply ended—nobody could make it up! We, thankfully, were heading down, and it was an awe-inspiring trip. We paused to re-group in the stream at the bottom, and when Malcolm rode up he declared "I don't remember much of these trails, but I sure remember that one!"

By the time we finally struggled out of the woods at four o'clock, we were pretty much all used up. I know for a fact that all of the convenience stores around both of our ride sites ran out of Advil, because I was looking for it. If you don't think there's a healthy market for over the counter pain killers, go riding with a group of middle-aged weekend warriors! We all loaded up, said our good-byes, and headed out of there. It was Tuesday night, we had cheated the bean counters for the past couple of days, and now it was time to get back to work, and pronto.

But what a great long weekend! The Granville benefit ride was a stroke of genius and a great ride in itself, and the turnout might indicate to someone that it was really welcome on that weekend (even though it conflicted with a NETRA enduro). Maybe the Knox Trail Riders would consider making it an annual event? It would be fun....

Nothing can ever be as much fun as playing hooky for two days of riding, though, especially with such a fun group. Big thanks go to Frank Esposito and Lisa Tetheron of MSR and Tucker-Rocky, for sponsoring such a shameless good time. Thanks, too, to Mike Stone and all his guides for a great sampling of some of NETRA's best trails. Finally, a big thanks to Malcolm Smith for just doing what he's done and making all this possible.

To ride the Not Just Any Sunday ride with the MSR gang, you're going to have to become a dealer and sell a load of MSR product to qualify, and we know the bulk of you will never do that. However, you can ride the same trails we did just by becoming a member of the New England Trail Rider Association and asking the NETRA office for the route sheets for each of the rides. Our ride in Vermont is known as Vermont Loop #3, while the Massachusetts rides are the Beartown State Forest Loop, and the October Mountain State Forest Loop. All you need is a legal bike, a roll chart holder and an odometer, and just follow the instructions on the route sheet. Have fun, and ride safely! □



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Editor Ken Faught has been riding for over 15 years and has competed in more than 650 motocross and off-road events. He's raced everything from GNCCs in Florida to arenacross in Ohio to desert races in Nevada. He's traveled the world over, covering events in Spain, France, Switzerland and the Czech Republic.

Feature Editor Karel Kramer hopped on his

first bike in 1965, and he's become our walking encyclopedia of technical knowledge on almost every machine made. He started racing motocross in '72 and has been an active competitor in off-road and motocross ever since.

Associate Editor Scott Hoffman has been addicted to motorcycles since attending the second running of the Superbowl of Motocross at age six. Since then he's covered every facet of the sport from working

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Rider's AA \_\_\_\_\_ A 4-Stroke \_\_\_\_\_

Class A \_\_\_\_\_ B 4-Stroke \_\_\_\_\_

(Check one): B \_\_\_\_\_ C 4-Stroke \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_ A Veteran (30+) \_\_\_\_\_

B Veteran (30+) \_\_\_\_\_

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# COMPETITION DIRT RIDERS, INC. PRESENTS

THE TWENTYSEVENTH ANNUAL



# BEEHIVE ENDURO

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30th, 1998

KEY TIME 8:00 AM

APPROX. 80 MILES OF SOUTH JERSEYS FINEST TRAILS

**Start** :Mauricetown Fire Hall, Mauricetown, NJ- Route 55 South to Route 47. South on Route 47 to traffic light at Wawa. Turn right go across bridge and turn left at next intersection. Go two blocks and turn right. Fire Hall on right. DO NOT PARK IN FRONT OF FIRE HALL!!!

**Rider Requirements**: All riders must be 18 years of age or older and have a valid motorcycle license, registration and insurance card. Riders must also have an A.M.A. Card and an E.C.E.A. Card. If you do not have an E.C.E.A. Card one may be obtained at no cost by taking a test on Sat., August 29th from 10AM to 8PM at the Fire Hall. No test will be given on Sunday. AMA applications also are available at sign-up. All Riders must wear eye protection at all times during the event.

**Machine Requirements**: All motorcycles must have a license plate, headlight and working muffler. Scorecards are to be mounted on front fender.

**Food & Refreshments**: Available at the Fire Hall Saturday evening and all day on Sunday. Good food at modest prices.

**Camping**: Plenty of free camping available. Trash bags available at the sign up table.

**Area Motels**: Ramada (Vineland) 696-3800, Millville Motor Inn 327-3300, Days Inn (Vineland) 690-5000, Country Inn 825-3100

**Gas Stops**: There will be 3 gas availables at 2 different locations. You will need 2 gas cans with 2.5 gallons each. Because of the difficulties in transporting gas please try to share pit crews. Containers must be red DOT approved or they will not be transported. First truck leaves at 7am Sharp!!!

Motorcycles are not to be started after 7PM on Saturday and not before 7AM on Sunday. Pit Racers will be disqualified.

**Entry Fees**: Pre \$30, Post \$35, Super Seniors & Women \$15, Masters \$5 Pre-Enter Only!! Drawing is August 15, 1997. Make checks payable to Competition Dirt Riders, Inc. Mail to Competition Dirt Riders, PO Box 549, Millville, NJ 08332. No refunds to accepted entrants.

**Information**: (609)327-5015 for Entries, (609)691-5371 or E-Mail Endurodave @ AOL.com. for Trail Info

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CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

BIKE MAKE \_\_\_\_\_ DISPLACEMENT \_\_\_\_\_

AA \_\_\_\_\_ A \_\_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_ 125 \_\_\_\_\_ 200 \_\_\_\_\_ 250 \_\_\_\_\_ OPEN \_\_\_\_\_

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## 400 Shootout (from page 20)

on a Harley rider. Combined with a 38mm Dell'Orto carb, the motor just keeps churning out useable power as long as you could keep the throttle screwed on. Unfortunately, in our eastern test conditions, this is seldom often enough.

Not surprisingly, power delivery plays right into the handling equation, the other dominant factors being suspension, wheel base and weight. A harbinger of things to come, when picking up our test steed, Mike Lafferty joked, "I like to ride the SC for training, because it's more of a workout for me. It makes my 250 feel like a featherweight." Truth is, at 267 pounds claimed dry weight (not that we actually believe this), the KTM feels heavier yet, a feeling that translates into a handful when negotiating tight, technical off-road obstacles.

The 'SC shows these old school roots in several places. On the positive side, it takes a nuclear explosion to knock the KTM off its line. It is rock stable in even the gnarliest terrain; roots, rocks and logs be damned, aided by a rigid feeling chassis. The front end sticks well, even when riding in a seated position. That's fortunate because the wide midsection, especially at the tank/seat junction, hampers the transition to standing and moving about. The seat might actually be wide enough to sleep on.

After a day in the Black Forest stick farm, Spence summed up his test ride. "The SC flounders in the tight, and I ran into a lot of stuff. But boy, cranking it up out on a sand road made it almost worth it. It goes fast in a straight line, which will be good on more open courses. The momentum generated by the bike's weight helps a lot in muddy conditions too, with the additional

### 400SC Specifications

Engine	398cc SOHC 4 valve head, 10.8:1 CR
Bore/Stroke	89mm X 64mm
Carburetion	Dell'Orto PHM38SD (38mm)
Ignition	SEM CDI
Transmission	5 speed
Gearing	14/50
Accessory Power	12V, 130 W
Claimed Dry Weight	267 lbs
Ground Clearance	13.8"
Wheelbase	59.4"
Fork/Travel	50mm WP Extreme/11.2"
Shock/Travel	WP/12.6"
Tires	Michelin Enduro Comp III
Fuel Capacity	9 liters

### TE410 Specifications

Engine	399.5cc, SOHC 4 valve head, 11.4:1 CR
Bore/Stroke	91.5mm X 60.8mm
Carburetion	Dell'Orto PHF36DS (36mm)
Ignition	Cagiva Digital CDI
Transmission	6 speed
Gearing	15/48
Accessory Power	12V, 130 W
Claimed Dry Weight	257.6 lbs
Ground Clearance	14.5"
Wheelbase	58.86"
Fork/Travel	50mm Marzocchi Magnum/12"
Shock/Travel	Sachs/12.6"
Tires	Michelin Enduro Comp III
Fuel Capacity	9.1 liters

umph needed to carry you through."

With all this mowing over things going on, it's a good thing that the 400 comes equipped with top notch suspension components. The WP Extreme fork and conventional WP shock both provided good performance and adjustability. Mike's bike was set up with stock springs and valving that managed to soak up large and small hits over a variety of terrain. Naturally, things

were set up a little stiffer than we need, but clicker spinning easily got them down to what more mundane riders would need. Spence's read: "The KTM doesn't wallow like most (Japanese) four stokes—my Suzuki (DR350 play-bike) feels like a marshmallow in comparison.."

### The Shootout

Motor - Essentially it comes down to choosing your weapon, low end or top end. For eastern conditions, we like the 410's power delivery, aided by the six speed tranny that is a

boon to both higher speed riding and dual sport conversion projects. The 400SC power delivery contributes to difficulties when negotiating tight technical woods obstacles. However, the roar of the KTM WFO is something to behold. The 410's motor is lighter weight, although the KTM

engine parts might (at least for now) be easier to get. Our call: advantage Husky.

Starting - Slight edge to Husky. Both exhibit fairly consistent starting habits with the occasional (rare) hot start difficulties. The Husky auto decompression works more consistently, however.

Suspension - Both bikes have quality suspensions that worked well right from the box. However, we have to give a slight edge to KTM, more based on what might happen, rather than what actually did. The Husky's Zoke fork has a history of being troublesome, maintenance wise, although the fork on our 410 test bike worked just fine. Additionally, the Sachs shock is a bit of a wildcard; revalving and spring replacements could be problematic. KTM's WP suspension, on the other hand, is race tested and proven. Both WP fork and shock are high quality components that tuners everywhere know inside and out.

Handling - Husky by a landslide. The TE410's weight and agility is head and shoulders above the ponderous KTM, without the sacrifice of stability. It proved an easy transition for two stroke riders. On the TE410, one test rider put it like this: "I hate four-strokes, but this is one I could ride."

Ergonomics - KTM loses points for a wide seat and midsection, where the Husky is considerably thinner. Neither bike's seat has a radically textured seat cover, which proved a disadvantage in wet and muddy conditions. Both have the seat quick release feature originally championed by Husqvarna and now adopted by KTM.

Controls - Both bikes use the same Domino controls. Good stuff. KTM gets the edge on the merit of the trick Magura tapered alloy handlebar and aluminum shifter/brake pedal, whereas the TE410 comes equipped with a carbon steel handlebar and shifter. However, the Husky's handlebars are rubber mounted for shock isolation, reducing rider fatigue.

Setup Requirements - Call it even. The KTM is ready to race right from the carton. However, the Husky comes with pricey extra hardware (speedo, switches, etc.), which would be a boon to dual sport conversions and trail riders.

Brakes - Slight edge to Husky. Both use identical Brembo braking components, however, the Husky rear rotor actually matches the contact face of the rear pads, which is much more than can be said for the KTM.

### Conclusion

So, what's it add up to? As with most bike purchase decisions its going to come down to personal preferences. They're both great bikes, but all things being equal, we'll bet the farm that a lot of eastern riders are going to find the TE410 just what the doctor ordered. □

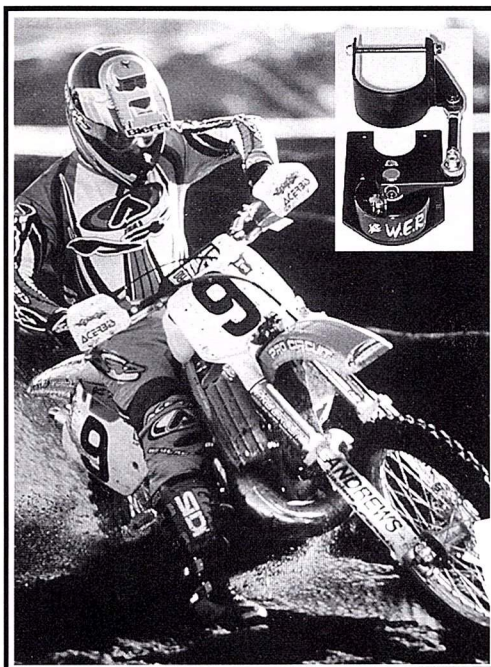
### Shootout Bike Hop-ups and Add-ons

#### TE410

Cut down steering stops  
Lower gearing  
Acerbis Rally handguards  
Removed instrument cluster and multifunction handlebar control unit  
Added resettable odo (stock KTM, from '90-'98 EXC models)  
Added aftermarket kill and lighting switches  
Acerbis front disk protector

#### 400sc

KTM competition exhaust system  
Trelleborg Supermaster front and rear tires  
Lower gearing  
Enduro Engineering alloy handguards and matching brush deflectors  
Acerbis front disk protector



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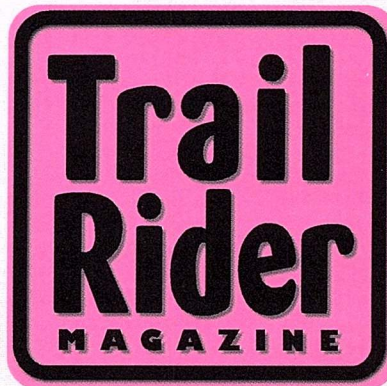
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# Trail Rider TOOLBOX

By Mark Uth

## Countdown to Exasperation

Every time we get into an argument over the merits of four-strokes versus two strokes, the sold-for-life thumper advocate eventually gets around to making the maintenance argument. If you haven't heard it lately, it goes like this: "Four-strokes are better because there's less maintenance. Top ends last millions of miles, in contrast to two stroke top ends that vaporize quicker than Pakistani plutonium."

We've all heard this before. What gets carefully omitted, however, is that four-stroke top ends are considerably more complex, having a multitude of additional parts involved. As a result, when you're finally forced to bite the bullet and refresh that thumper top end, the level of effort is incomparable to that of a two stroke job. For all of the nouveau thumper pilots out there, we're going try to add some metrics to the equation so that you know what you're in for when those new YZ/WR400s start needing attention (probably about a year or two from now).

Admittedly, we were at a bit of a disadvantage when undertaking this task. Because of their longevity, four-stroke test bikes in the Trail Rider stable seldom get to the point of needing a top end rebuild. However, an opportunity recently arose for us to dust off our four-banger mechanical prowess using an aging Honda XR250L test mule for the occasion. Said steed had near 5000 miles on the original (stock) top end, and had recently begun to detonate as a result of carbon buildup within the combustion chamber and atop the piston crown. What we were rewarded with was an exhausting task of removing parts, parts, and more parts, just to get down to the piston and rings. I shudder in disbelief at the number of fasteners that must be turned to complete this job. Our resulting report: "Fifty Ways to Loathe Your Four-stroke."

Here's the blow by blow.

1 - 5: Fasteners one through five start easily enough. In short order various plastic and body work is removed, including two seat bolts, one side cover, and two gas tank securing fasteners. After disconnecting the fuel line from the carburetor, all said hardware is removed and set aside.

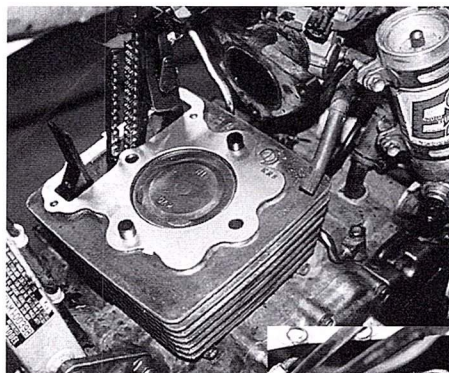
6 - 9: Our first deviation, four nuts fasten the header pipe to the head. Remove these 6mm nuts and the band clamp that con-

nects the header pipe to the muffler. Slide the header pipe off for later inspection and/or repair.

10, 11, 12: Hey, even two strokes have head-stays of the same design. Unscrew the three bolts that fasten the head to the frame and remove the accompanying brackets.

13-29: Whoa, we're not in Kansas anymore, Toto! The valve cover is secured by 15, count 'em, 15, six millimeter socket head cap screws. What's this, a KTM or something? Using a five millimeter hex wrench or 3/8" drive socket attachment (preferred), carefully remove these bolts that seal along the perimeter of the valve cover. Additionally, there's one main bolt with a 12mm head that fastens down through the center. With these bolts removed, the valve cover may be lifted off. Some mechanics recommend removing the valve adjustment access covers (four each) prior to valve cover removal, although this isn't mandatory.

30, 31, 32: Details, details. Remove the three bolts that secure the intake manifold to the head. On our XR, six millimeter bolts with a ten millimeter head are used.



50 fasteners before you get to see what makes a four-stroke so different.

33: Loosen and remove the banjo bolt and two copper washers that connect the oil feed line to the head. Leave the oil line in place (still fastened to the cases).

34-37: Four each long six millimeter bolts (w/8mm head) fasten down the cam chain tensioner and seal the perimeter of the cam chain passageway. Carefully remove these next. It's essential that they be removed prior to loosening the head bolts, otherwise they will likely get stripped out of the cylinder as the main head bolts are loosened. Unload the chain tensioner (a tricky procedure) and secure it in that position with a 2mm cotter pin or small finishing nail.

38, 39: Loosen and remove the two bolts that secure the cam gear to the camshaft. Our XR uses special high strength six millimeter threaded bolts with a ten millimeter head. Afterward, lift the cam chain off the cam gear, allowing the cam shaft and gear to be extracted. Tie a string to the cam chain to prevent its falling into the crankcase. For that matter, be extremely careful not to drop any fasteners down into

the crankcase. While that fate never befell upon this mechanic, it would no doubt be a first class pain in the arse, should it occur.

40-43: Now we're ready to loosen the four head bolts. These dog bone shaped fasteners are fairly tight (torqued to 29 ft-lbs.). A 12mm deep socket does the trick. Carefully lift off the head afterward and set it aside for cleaning and/or any additional attention.

44, 45: There are two each six millimeter thread, eight millimeter head, cam passageway to crankcase sealing bolts on the right side of the cylinder. These must be removed prior to attacking the cylinder retaining bolts for the same reason as fastener nos. 34-37.

46-49: Well, we made it down to the cylinder. Four each cylinder retaining bolts, similar to the dog bone shaped head bolts, are all that stands between us and the piston. Like the head bolts, they're plenty tight. Afterward, slide the jug off and we finally have access to the piston.

50: A final affront. Remove the timing port access screw (five millimeter socket head) to ready for the reverse process. This will allow crank position to be correlated with camshaft position when we get to valve timing time. Fifty fasteners. And we're only halfway done.

### Reassembly

Piston changeover itself isn't all that different from ring dings. Remove one circlip and slide out the piston pin. There's no needle bearing on our XR motor, so don't panic when you don't find one.

Re-ringing the piston is a little more complex as a result of an extra three piece ring for top end lubrication. Install all the various rings following the conventions shown

in your shop manual. For our Honda, this means ensuring that any printing on the various rings faces upward. Reinstall the piston onto the rod with a new piston pin, securing it with new circlips. Liberally coat the piston and rings with engine assembly lube (or motor oil). Prior to sliding the jug back on, properly orient the ring gap in accordance with your shop

manual. Since there are no ports to be snagged, four stroke pistons don't have a ring gap centering pin. However, ring gap position is still important for optimum performance. On our XR motor, the top compression ring gap was oriented directly toward the exhaust port. The second ring orientation was ninety degrees from that, pointed to the side of the motor. Install a new base gasket, and don't forget to replace the centering dowel pins. Slide jug over the piston while compressing the rings with your other hand.

Buildup of the motor from here is pretty much the reverse of the disassembly process. With both the cylinder and head reinstallation, be sure to install and torque down the four each main bolts first, prior to installing and tightening the smaller 6mm bolts used to seal the cam chain passageway. A liberal use of thread anti-seize is recommended for all fasteners.

The only other hurdles at this point are



camshaft installation and valve timing. Since various models differ, you'll have to consult your shop manual for particulars. Rest assured, for the occasional four-stroke mechanic, valve timing can be tricky, and there's little room for error. A couple of tips. First, be sure to use the proper flywheel timing mark. Our Honda must have a half dozen different notches in it for one purpose or another. The proper valve timing mark has a "T" stamped next to it. Afterward, slowly run the engine through a couple of revolutions to be sure that everything is free and working smoothly—don't just hop on the kickstarter and give it a boot, lest valves be damaged when contacting the piston crown due to improper timing.

Before installing the valve cover, slosh more assembly lube onto the camshaft, cam chain, etc. If you did any headwork in conjunction with your top end job, you'll need to readjust your valve clearances. Otherwise, we'd recommend breaking in the engine first (an hour or so of light operation), then go back and reset the valve clearances. Finish up the project by re-installing the intake manifold, oil feed line, head stay, header pipe, and various plastic.

I figure that the comparable number of fasteners wrenched during a typical two-stroke top end job might be a dozen or so, but that would certainly be on the high side for an air cooled model (like our XR). Rest assured, had the test mule been water cooled, things would have been worse yet. I guess it's payback for all of those extra miles of maintenance free riding. And everyone knows, paybacks are a bitch. □



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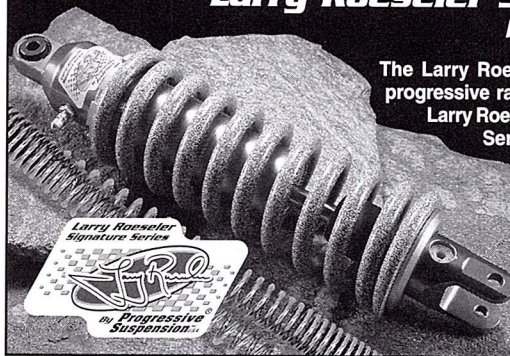
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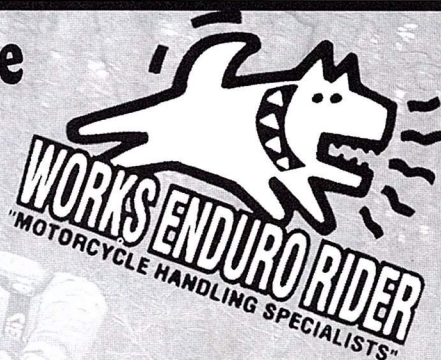
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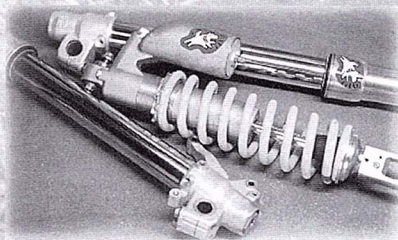
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# HERTFELDER

## Let the Chips Fall....

**T**ank" Tompkins earned his nickname honestly. He could take his 441 Victor across an overgrown field of milkweed laced with greenbrier vines, and his arrow-straight path would look like that made by a large tracked vehicle.

Tank was six feet, four inches, tall with no discernable neck, and legs so short that he always appeared to be walking on soft ground and sinking. His shoulders were not quite wide enough for him to hang glide himself, but were certainly within a few inches of free flight width.

I remember once riding bent over, with my nose almost dimpling the gas cap along a dark and overgrown cranberry bog dike. Tank went by me in a swirl of broken branches and terrified insects, and he'd removed so much vegetation that the sun suddenly began to hurt my eyes.

Those of us who were familiar with Tompkins' style might describe a recently bulldozed pipeline as a "Tompkins track."

The thick brush on the edge of a drainage ditch that had been bulldozed past by a motorcycle was referred to as "Tompkined around." "Tompkinning" a steep downhill meant you had the engine stalled, the rear wheel locked up, tires plowing and you were feverishly looking for a nice tree to grab.

As a general rule, Tank would finish an enduro wearing nothing above the waist but a helmet and a pair of shoulder pads. This doesn't mean he left the start line dressed that way; far from it. He usually left wearing six or seven layers of outerwear which he soon tore to shreds as he crashed into the scenery. Some said he navigated by compass, deviating slightly from his course for trees over two inches in diameter, and not at all for those smaller.

If you rode on a later number than Tompkins, it was easy to see the looping arcs of torn weeds where he had overshot a turn then plowed his way back to the arrows. Riding on a number earlier than Tank's meant having to be constantly alert for the dust cloud angling in an instant before Tank would come crashing back onto the trail after one of his excursions into unexplored territory.

On one memorable occasion Tank missed a turn onto a railroad cut, some seven or eight feet deep. He reentered the trail just ahead of me at a fair rate of speed, dropped to the roadbed in a perfect two wheel landing, and, since he was standing at the time, tore both footpegs right off his motorcycle! He continued on as if nothing had happened, and finished the last 40 miles with his feet on top of the crankcases.

Tank stopped riding for a time after he fractured an ankle on a concrete geodetic survey marker at the worst possible time. He was

already on notice from his boss, landlord and wife to shape up or ship out.

He was being ganged-up on and he took it like a man—whimpering all the way.

We have all noticed that the wives of men laid up with leg injuries are 100 percent susceptible to pregnancy. We'll need more research to come up with an explanation for this. And it came to pass that Mrs. Tank brought forth a 10 pound, six ounce, chip off the old block during his recuperation. They called the chunk Christopher, everyone else called him "Little Tank."

Tompkins brought Little Tank to all the enduros. When he was three years old Little

Tank was pedaling around on a tricycle that Tompkins had turned into a Harley Servi-cycle. At age seven Little Tank had a centrifugal clutch motorcycle powered by a chain saw engine, custom made boots, a helmet, and a little fanny pack made from a shaving gear pouch. Tompkins was usually two steps behind ready, to upright the rig if it dropped a wheel in a rat hole or tipped over on a mislaid brick.

When he was eleven, Little Tank was on a Yamaha 80, and keeping up with him on foot was out of the question; sometimes keeping him IN SIGHT was cause for concern. At 14 Little Tank was on a 125 size enduro model, and was a joy to behold as he wheeled up AND down through the gears, and he could do it in reverse gear if he had one.

In his first legal enduro Little Tank started as a 'C' rider, won his class going away and notched up into 'B' class. At his second enduro, the kid had some bike trouble which he corrected in time to win a third overall and a move to the 'A' class.

It was apparent that the 'little' guy wasn't a chip off the old block at all. Dad rode like a sumo wrestler; the Little edition rode like a Golden Gloves Flyweight. At his fourth event—the Ridge Run—they had me on the same number as Little Tank. The ONLY reason I was there was to help the Meteor club take home the Best Represented Club trophy.

Me and Little Tank had a chance to talk at

the 30 minute layover gas stop. Sometimes referred to as The Mercy Stop, it was nicely laid out with our fuel cans in 10 separate rows. Numbers 1,11,21,31,etc. in one row and 2,22,23,24, etc in another. Each group of riders, if they were on schedule, would be separated by 10 minutes, causing a great reduction in crying and complaining, and handlebars in kidneys.

"How you doing, Little Tank?" I asked as I hustled to get organized and pick up some of the twenty minutes I was down.

"Dropped two," he said, "how about you?" "I didn't bring my calculator"

"THAT bad, huh?" he laughed as he kicked his bike to life and took off.

Riding along at my normal Low Score Finisher speed, I was surprised to find Little Tank off his bike and talking to a girl at check #8.

"What happened?" I asked him as I turned to the check crew and began my Academy Award "Water, water, aaaagh, water!" performance which usually gets something liquid poured down my throat.

"I'm good," he said, "eet's-a no problema, mon." Then he took a few steps toward the big water jug held by a girl who had quite sizable jugs herself. The girl's eyes followed him with a look between admiration and GREAT admiration. I could tell that any resistance on his part would be futile. He was about to be hooked to the bone and reeled in to be put on ice, and, hopefully, not hurt too badly in the process.

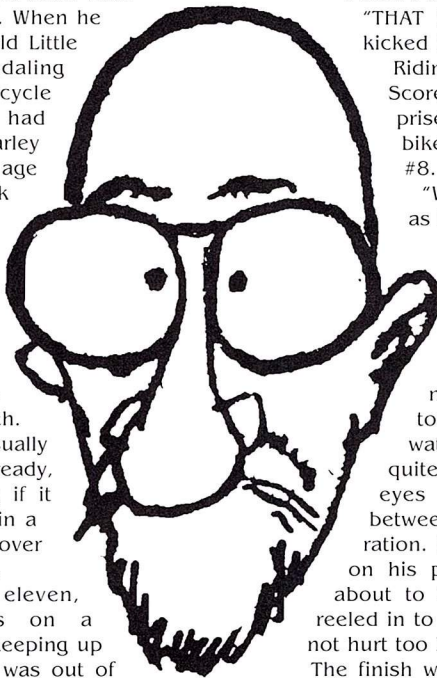
The finish was some distance up the trail from the firehouse, with a half-barrel of beer in a washtub full of ice. Most riders; myself included, were scooping up a couple of plastic cups of ice water before going for the brew. Regardless of the supposed benefits beer has for relieving thirst, it is just another advertising lie—nothing beats water.

The original "Tank" Tompkins was near the barrel going half out of his mind with worry before he jumped to his feet as Little Tank purred in 55 minutes late! The boy parked his motorcycle, put his arm around his father's shoulder and walked him toward me, away from the crowd.

"Dad!" I heard him say, "You just GOT to meet this girl!"

—Ed Hertfelder

*Ed Hertfelder is a teller of tales and writer of books, as well as author of the internationally famous Duct Tapes stories. He can be reached at P.O. Box 17564, Tucson AZ 85731.*





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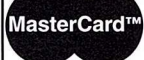
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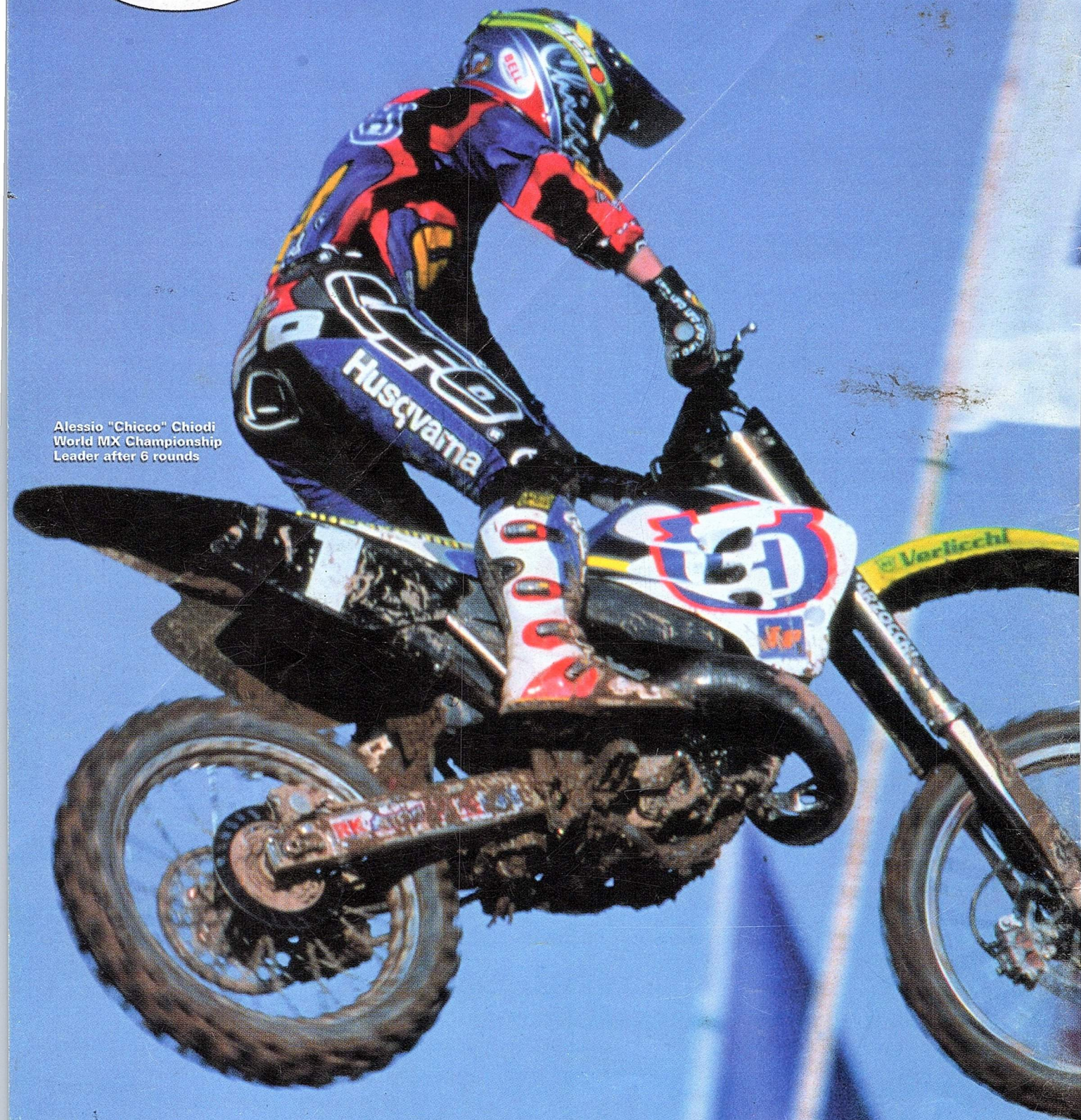
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